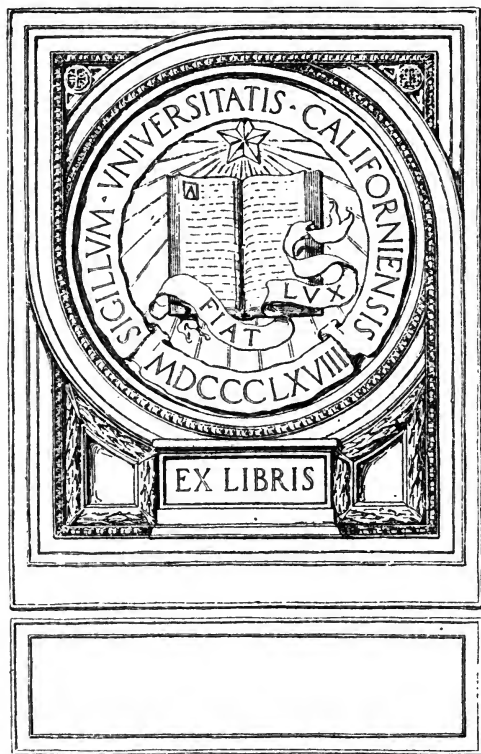


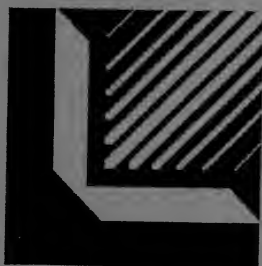
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MAKING MORE MONEY IN STOREKEEPING

By

W. R. HOTCHKIN

Ten years Advertising Manager for John Wanamaker, New York
Author of "The Manual of Successful Storekeeping"



NEW YORK
THE RONALD PRESS COMPANY
1917

HF5429
H7

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William G. Hewitt Press, Brooklyn, Printers
J. F. Tapley Co., New York, Binders

THE OBJECT OF THIS BOOK

The day of haphazard money-making in the dry goods and department store business has gone. In the good old days when every merchant started "from scratch," with nothing but his own wits to help him win, there was enough easy business to provide a satisfactory volume and sufficient net profits for almost any man who went into the game.

Today competition has grown to a state bordering on ferocity, and modern methods of efficiency, salesmanship, advertising, and service have produced powerful allurements to attract the public, and added mightily to the cost of doing business.

The merchant of today, who is not a commercial athlete, in constant training, eternally alert, quick to act, and equipped with modern strategy and skill in merchandising, advertising, and salesmanship, must be content with a diminishing volume of business and very precarious profits.

The object of this book is to stimulate merchants and all ambitious store workers, to more aggressive, intelligent daily effort—to show merchant, manager, or salesperson, ways to make more sales—to make the store more pleasing to customers—to constantly make more friends for themselves as well as for the store.

The book does not present theories, or mere opinions. It is based upon the experiences, policies, and principles learned during many valuable years of responsible and productive work for John Wanamaker and Gimbel Brothers in New York City.

The very great value of the application of these ideas, policies, and plans to other stores all over the country, has been abundantly testified to by hundreds of merchants in large cities and small villages, in whose service I have worked for more than three years.

W. R. HOTCHKIN.

New York City,
July 1, 1917.

INTRODUCTORY*

THIRTY-ONE YEARS AGO, in Philadelphia, there was conceived a new kind of store. It was evolved and brought forth from the troubled chaos of sharp practice which preceded it.

In the beginning man fought the beasts of the forests to secure his raiment. Within the memory of men not yet old, the securing of a new Fall suit at a fair price, was only achieved after a long battle of wits and hours of price-haggling.

Back in 1874, from "Oak Hall," came the first shot of the great commercial revolution, and two years later, at the "Grand Depot," at Thirteenth and Market, the New Kind of a Store declared its independence of old traditions and started the new era in General Retailing.

Then, for the first time, the purchaser received

A Full Guarantee.

The One Lowest Price.

The Return of Money for Goods, if desired.

At once and forever was dissipated the fear, uncertainty, suspicion, and deception. The price-figure that was not afraid to face the criticism of the whole world—the trade as well as the public—appeared boldly on every garment, every bolt of goods, on every article for sale.

The day that One-Price and the Free Returnability of Goods was established storekeeping became an honorable business. The merchant and his salesmen could go home at night feeling that they had robbed no man of his fair bargain, and

*Wanamaker Editorial, published October 2nd, 1907, written by W. R. Hotchkin.

without regrets for not having tried to get more where some sale came with unusual ease.

That day laid the solid steel rails for the train of commerce, instead of the rock-strewn road of price-haggling which had compelled slow travel until that day.

For the first time in the history of the Retail Business the strongest feature of good advertising became a possibility—the Price could be quoted to the public.

That act tore down the fence of fear. The store was no longer a trap to catch the unwary. The merchandise was as good legal tender at Wanamaker's as a bank note backed by the Government; for it could be brought back for the money at the buyer's option.

All of this sounds trite and commonplace today, but it created a trade revolution THEN.

Every morning the Wanamaker thought is: "How can we make this store BETTER?" "How can we give better public service—greater satisfaction to our customers; how make the working conditions better for our employees?"

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MAKING MORE MONEY IN STOREKEEPING

PART I

PROGRESSIVE STORE POLICIES

THE store that is not operated according to well thought out policies, reminds one of a stream of water that trickles down the mountain side according to the exigencies of the moment and the force of gravitation, wasting its substance and losing force, turned aside by every little obstacle.

How different when scientific accuracy lays out the direction and the grades of the stream! How much greater its power! How much shorter the distance the water must travel!

Store policies are too often formulated in the face of trouble, on the basis of accidental conditions, instead of the logical requirements of equity to customer and store.

Every merchant must create the character of his own store. But his work should be done in quiet hours of reflection, not in the heat of a personal argument with a customer.

The chapters that follow do not attempt to formulate a store's policies. They present data, and suggest ideas and methods which will aid the merchant in formulating his individual policy.

I

CREATING A STORE THAT PEOPLE LIKE

Making Friends

The fundamental factor in making sales and in making money is to have the goods that people want, and serve them with the kinds they LIKE. But it must never be forgotten that every store must have something else to sell besides its goods, or it may not have many customers. Service, information, advice, courtesy, protection, are a few of the very definite accessories that have come to be a part of every purchase in the good store, and when any of them are lacking or indifferent in quality, it reflects as greatly upon the store as though the goods themselves were imperfect or overpriced.

There is no "off season" for making friends in storekeeping. Whenever a day comes when you can relax your merchandising efforts, it brings the chance to think about developing a better organization and greater store efficiency. During the rush of the busy season you may have felt justified in neglecting the education of your salespeople; at least in not calling them from their work to teach them things that they should know in order to serve your customers better. If this has been the case in your store, you should use the opportunities provided by dull selling days, or between-seasons days, to get ready for the next season. You must never forget that there is going to be a NEXT SEASON, and none but a pessimist will admit beforehand that it is going to be anything but a GOOD season. Always, whether business is good or bad, success for your store depends upon giving better public service—in having a better store, better assorted stocks, and in making people LIKE YOUR STORE.

Courtesy All Day Long

Recently a large store got out a button bearing the words "Courtesy First." This button was worn by everybody in the organization from the general manager to the delivery boy. It unquestionably created a tremendous amount of good-will for that wide-awake concern—provided the button told the truth and the whole organization carried out the spirit of its fine motto.

The first thing that such a button will accomplish is to impress upon the mind of every employee of the organization that courtesy is required in every action all day long. It is going to make the salespeople more courteous to customers. It is going to make the delivery boys more courteous when they deliver packages. It is going to make the employees more courteous to each other, and if the store has any horses in the delivery service, it is going to make the drivers more considerate of the horses. It is a fine thought to have and it is a splendid thing to put the motto out in front where everybody can see it all the time, and thus inspire the building up of a friend-making disposition. It is the making of friends that makes big business. The more friends we have the more successful we are, whether we are blacksmiths or storekeepers.

The carrying out of this "Courtesy First" idea by every store in the country is recommended, because the wearing of a button bearing these words will have a larger influence upon the minds of the employees of an establishment than a great many lectures. But the lectures must also be given, to instil the idea of courtesy into the mind of every employee from the top to the bottom of the organization, for courtesy is the most important factor in building a following for a store. After that, you will want to instruct your people in every phase of good salesmanship, to teach them everything they should know, for instance, about the merchandise they sell. Then when customers come to the counter they will be served, everyone,

with courteous intelligence which will impress them with the thorough efficiency of your organization. When your salespeople meet customers with a manner which commands their approval, your store is going to be more widely respected in your community, and you will have created a factor that will place you above ordinary competition. Of course, the merchandise you sell and the prices at which you sell it, are always the most powerful factors in building a business. But other things being equal, or nearly equal, the store where the salespeople are courteous and intelligent is going to win the custom of the best people in any community.

Some Things To Do

There are various things that may be done in an inexpensive but forceful way, to make people like your store and talk about it. Now and then on a very hot summer day serve lemonade at some cool spot in the store and have it dispensed by a bright-looking girl, in a clean white suit, with a maid's cap. Have everything cool and clean about the counter where it is served. Be sure that the lemonade is the best possible in every particular. Have plenty of clean glasses or individual paper drinking cups. This is not a thing to do every day or every week. It will have a great deal more force; it will create a great deal more talk, if you make a special treat of it once in a while on very hot days. When the lemonade is being served, be sure that you have neat cards announcing the fact posted at many prominent places throughout the store, worded about as follows:

ICE COLD LEMONADE

is being served to our customers today

Main Floor Rear

Go and get a glass at your convenience

On other hot days women will be glad to be presented with a neat and inexpensive fan. It is very much better to give a little nicer fan once in a while, than to give away thousands of the very cheap pasteboard fans that break before they are used ten minutes. Those cheap fans become expensive when they are given away continuously and they never create the effect secured from a little better fan given once in a while. On certain days give some little toy to children. It takes very little to make them happy and to win appreciation from their mothers. All of these little attentions create good feeling and make mothers and the children talk about the store to neighbors and friends. This is the most valuable advertising that a store can have.

"Small Service Is True Service"

If you can keep this spirit of service before your mind continuously, you will think of thousands of things that you can do, and you will discover that the expense of doing them is quite small while the results may be tremendous. It is chiefly the disposition to make people like your store that develops that effect in your community. If you really and seriously study your public all the time and try to make your store more definitely meet their desires and conveniences, your store must grow better and your organization more efficient all the time. This is going to make friends who will buy from you and talk about your store. No more valuable work can be done in the development of any business.

II

WHO DOESN'T BUY IN YOUR STORE? GO AFTER HIM—OR HER

Face the Facts

Have you ever taken the time to sit back and try to size up the position of your store in your community? Or have you been so busy buying merchandise, counting figures, worrying about stock on hand and other goods coming, that you have never taken time to get a comprehensive view of your business as a whole, and really to learn how many people, who were once your customers, now never come into your store, and how many others who ought to be your customers, rarely or never make a purchase from you? It might be very easy to get your old customers back, if you made the right effort to get them. As for the strangers, no man is much of a merchant who fails to attract the interest of practically every person in his community at least once in a while. But earnest, honest thought must be given to the subject. Don't fool yourself, and don't be afraid to face the facts. They will be your best friends in curing shortcomings.

Where Are You Wrong?

First, are you doing the biggest business in your city? If not, why not? If you are doing the biggest business, why are your competitors, even though smaller, taking so much business away from you? What do some people find in the other stores that pleases them better than what they find in your store? Have you lost any customers in the past season? Why did they leave you and go to some other store to do their buying? Is there part of the trade in your city that you do

not seem able to get? Why should this be so? Does your store look shabby? Does it need a cleaning up? Does it need new paint? Have you got a lot of old goods that are being shown to customers, making them think that your stock is out of date? Are your salespeople careless, or not courteous?

Get Right First

All of these questions are asked because it is of vital importance that you get things right in the store, before you begin to make your efforts to bring back customers you have lost, or to bring in customers whom you have never had. Of course, you can never hope to get ALL the business ALL the time. But it should be possible for any wide-awake store to get some business from all the people part of the time. This is the important work that you must find some way of doing. Plans must be made for events which will get everybody in the city interested in your store for that moment at least. After you have gained the attention of everybody once, you can go to work to secure more frequent purchases from these people. Merchants get into a habit of mind that makes them feel that they are catering to some certain part of the community, and frequently they take it for granted that they cannot get any other kind of trade. This is simply because they do not make the proper effort to broaden their business.

Put Facts on Paper

In analyzing your own case take two sheets of paper. Make the heading of sheet 1, "The Trade That I Have Got"; and the heading of sheet 2, "The Trade That I Don't Seem to Get." On sheet 1 mark down "The High Class Trade," "The Cheap Trade," "The Middle Class Trade," or whatever term you wish to use to designate the people who buy from you. Then add a list of the departments of your store which are doing strong healthy business. On sheet 2 indicate the classes

of people in your community that rarely come into your store. Then make a list of the departments that are not doing as much business as you think they should. It is sheet 2 that requires your serious consideration. If there is a certain class of people in your community that does not buy in your store, it is because you do not properly cater to the wants of those people.

What Trade Do You Want?

There was a time when the Wanamaker store was called a "cheap store." This was in the early days. There was another time when the New York store of John Wanamaker, particularly, had the reputation of being a good store, but a high-priced one. In overcoming this public impression the under-price store was inaugurated, first on an upper floor of the building, and afterward in the basement. But John Wanamaker always gave intelligent consideration to this problem. He was never willing to have his store called a "cheap store" or a "high-priced store." He was never willing to have his business confined to any particular class of the community. He sought to cater to the rich, and to the poor, and to the great middle class. He has been eminently successful in getting all classes of people to trade at his stores. For this reason he has attained the largest volume of business that goes to any store in either New York or Philadelphia. The Marshall Field business in Chicago is operated on the same principle. But they have made their great success in reaching the lower middle class and the cheaper trade in their basement store.

In both of these cases the policy of the store has been to provide the merchandise and the service required by *all* classes in their communities, and these merchants have notably succeeded in securing a greater volume of business than that obtained by their competitors who did not so thoroughly cater to all classes.

Broadest Service for Largest Success

In studying how to increase the volume of any business, the largest immediate results will come from intelligent efforts to draw to the store people who previously have not been attracted to it. For instance, one store that had been doing a conservative business in refined wearing apparel moved into a building four times as large and had to plan immediately to increase its business to a very large extent in order to make the new building profitable. In this case it was absolutely necessary to broaden the lines of merchandise in order to appeal to the more conservative element of the community, and this was the policy pursued. Exactly in this manner every merchant should consider the possibilities of his community. This is exactly what is suggested in the subject of this discussion.

Mend the Holes

First determine who does not buy at your store—the class, the individual, or the purchaser of some definite sort of merchandise. If you are doing a good business in dress goods and are not selling a proportionate amount of shoes, you should study the shoe department until you have found out what is wrong and how to correct the defect. It may be a weak manager. It may be a bad location in your store. It may be a lack of trained salespeople. It may be because of poor advertising. It may be one of a dozen other reasons. But the problem must be studied, and handled courageously when you have found what is wrong. This sort of analysis should be made of every stock in your store. When you have found out what is wrong and have corrected the error, then you must make every effort to exploit the facts of how you have strengthened and improved your business to everyone upon whom you hope to impress your store's improved character.

People You Must Win

When you go over your list of charge accounts and pick out the names of people who have not purchased from you for a year or more, you have direct advertising to do. You know exactly to whom to write and what to say to them. If somebody in your organization can sit down with a city directory or a telephone book, and check off the names of people who do not buy at your store, this will give you a valuable list to work on. A comparison of the telephone book with a card index of your customers, will enable you to make the list you need. You should start immediately to prepare a plan of campaign for the coming season, addressing by name the people who do not now buy at your store. In one letter you can state frankly that you realize with regret that they are not dealing with you, and ask them to favor you with a suggestion of why they do not buy at your store. Ask them to be as frank as they will, and say that you will thank them for any adverse criticism they may make, either about your merchandise, your store service, your store policy, or your location. A great deal of very valuable information should be the result. Later you can address to these same people, at intervals of two weeks or a month, definite announcements about your merchandise or store events. If these are worded carefully they should make a powerful appeal, and bring at least one purchase from each individual.

Customers in Every Home

Strange as it may seem, not one merchant in a hundred takes seriously the matter of individuals who do not trade with him. But no community is so big that any merchant can afford to have any person in it absolutely ignore his business. If direct intensive advertising is done, there need be no family in your city that does not buy in your store once in a while, unless you admit that your store is not worthy of their pat-

ronage. If this subject is taken seriously, and if a committee of your managers is put at the work, first of learning the names and addresses of the people who do not trade at your store, and then of getting up the right kind of letters and advertising literature to send to these names—it will have a very definite influence in increasing your trade, and in bringing back customers who have left your store on account of some dissatisfaction that may be removed.

III

DO YOUR PEOPLE BELIEVE IN YOUR STORE?

Do You, Yourself?

Let me start with the merchant himself. Do you, the owner of the business, thoroughly believe in the merchandise that is now in your stocks? Do you believe that in every department it is the best obtainable at the price paid? Do you believe that it can stand drastic comparison with the merchandise in the stores of your competitors? Do you believe in the quality, the patterns? Have they been selected with expert knowledge and good taste? First of all, *you* must believe in your own store, yourself. It would be a fatal admission for you to answer anything but "Yes" to any of these questions. If your goods are not the best at the price in every respect, there is something vitally wrong with your buying organization, and you are in a very weak condition to compete with the other stores in your city. But I do not believe that this message will go to one merchant in a hundred who does not believe that his new goods have been well selected, and that they will stand thorough comparison with those of any other store in the city. If this is your belief, if you do have this confidence in your merchandise, then you must instil that belief and confidence into the minds and hearts of all your employees.

"Good Enough" is Bad Enough

A serious weakness in most stores comes from the fact that the merchant, the managers, the buyers, the salespeople, are content merely to feel that the merchandise is what it

should be, that it is right and fairly priced. Nobody has any special enthusiasm. They think of the merchandise as merely right but ordinary goods, and they are perfectly satisfied to show it calmly to customers and let it speak for itself. This attitude is all wrong. It is poor storekeeping and poor salesmanship. If the goods have been well selected, if they are the best in every grade, if they represent good taste, it should be a very easy matter to establish a true estimate of the value of the store's merchandise in the minds of everybody in the organization. It should be a simple matter to call the organization together and impress them with the facts about the goods in your store. You must arouse their enthusiasm and confidence. They must feel that the goods they offer are the best that the customer can find anywhere. They must feel sure of the quality. They must believe that the styles are right. They must be absolutely confident that the prices are the lowest for which goods of each quality can be sold.

Selling What We Like

It is always easy for a salesperson to sell goods that he believes in. It is mighty hard for him to sell goods when he is doubtful about them. But the intrinsic quality of the goods, quite frequently, has much less to do with successful selling than you would expect. Very often one salesperson will have tremendous success in selling some article that another salesperson cannot sell at all. In such cases, what counts is not the customer, nor the merchandise; but the impression which those particular goods have made upon the salesperson, and which, through him, is imparted to the customer. The enthusiastic admiration, expressed by the salesperson for his goods, is always contagious. The customer is made to feel that goods which appeal so strongly to the salesperson who is familiar with all the goods, must be right in quality and style, and he buys readily.

Sell Salespeople First

Since the favorable opinion of the salesperson is so necessary to successful selling, it is of the utmost importance that the quality and merits of each line of merchandise should be thoroughly demonstrated to the salespeople, who are to sell it. They must be told how to distinguish the new patterns and colorings, and just why they are fashionable or suitable for their purpose. They must be told just why their goods are better than the less desirable sorts, so that they may explain their virtues to the customers. They must, in short, be told all the reasons why these particular goods were chosen, instead of others, and this definite knowledge will establish complete confidence and provide the selling arguments to convince their customers. When goods are once thoroughly "sold" to the salespeople, they are half sold to the public.

Sinister Disloyalty

Stores, as a rule, are honeycombed with employees who have the secret opinion that some other store sells better goods than the store that employs them; or that prices are lower elsewhere. Of course, there are exceptions; but this fact is so common that it must be given the most serious consideration, and only the most thorough education about the merits of your goods can effectually weed out this disloyalty which may be more costly than you believe. Every store has some strong reason for its existence. Even when there is a much better store in the city, there still remains some powerful reason why the apparently weaker store continues to do business. It may be because it is more efficiently merchandised and promoted in some particular department. It may be because the management knows better how to cater to people who want goods at low prices. It may be because they understand buying and selling fine goods better than their competitors. So it is not necessary that a store should do the biggest and finest business

in the city to secure the absolute confidence of its clientele in its merchandise.

Every Store Has Some Point of Strength

Every successful store has a constituency of people who believe that it is the best store in which to buy the kind of goods that they want, and at the prices they want to pay. If this were not true, the stores would be out of business. For this reason every good store deserves and should secure the absolute loyalty and confidence of every person whom it employs. I heartily despise inefficient salespeople as a rule. But I believe that if I had to choose between the inefficient and the disloyal, I would take the inefficient and try to educate them, providing they had an enthusiastic spirit of loyalty for the store and its merchandise, because there is a very definite factor of efficiency about believing in the goods you have for sale. Regardless of how good a salesman or a saleswoman behind a counter in a store may be, if there is a feeling in that person's mind that there is better merchandise in some other store, or that the style might be better, that person is handicapped no matter what selling ability may be possessed.

Confidence Is Vital

Every merchant who has read thus far will realize the importance of establishing this confidence in his merchandise among his salespeople. The next question is—how can it be done? The first thing necessary is to have every buyer or manager of the organization take the time and the right method to show all the people in his department all the merits of the new merchandise. The work may be done part at a time, but the salespeople at every counter should be fully informed about the various virtues of every piece of merchandise they are going to be called upon to sell. They should be told why it is best, why it is cheap at this price, why it was

selected among the scores of lines of other merchandise offered. A certain time each day, or at least each week, should be set aside for this important work, and the firm and the management should see that it is thoroughly carried out, and should take frequent opportunities of asking the individual salespeople about the merchandise that they sell. Nothing will spur on the salespeople to know their merchandise more than to anticipate being asked questions about it by the firm.

Impress Your Salespeople

The next important thing to be done is the holding of frequent meetings where the subject matter of this chapter shall be thoroughly discussed before the salespeople. Impress upon them in the most emphatic way possible, the vital importance of their knowing all about the merchandise, of their believing in it, and of their possessing such enthusiasm as will make them feel that when presenting it to their customers they are offering the very best goods that the price will buy.

Convince the Advertiser

While establishing this confidence in the minds of the salespeople, do not overlook the importance of seeing that the same confidence and enthusiasm exists completely in the mind of the advertising manager. In fact, he should be educated first, and should help the firm and the management in the work of enthusing the salespeople. All his advertising should express this confidence, not only in the actual words used in the advertising, but in the spirit of the advertising. There should be a feeling of thorough belief in the goods that he is advertising. If he does not have this belief, he should state the fact truthfully to the firm, and the firm should welcome such frank expression of feeling on his part. Very frequently criticism of merchandise on the part of the advertising manager leads to an improvement in the stocks and starts the store

to a larger success and a more prosperous future. The advertising manager who is most dangerously disloyal to his firm is the one who sees shortcomings in the merchandise, and tries to make up for it in untruthful statements in the advertising. This man is undermining your store's future, he is sticking a knife right into the heart of your business. But the advertising man who has the cleverness to discover, and the courage to tell the firm, that the goods in a certain department are not what they should be, and that they do not deserve the support of the advertising, is giving the most valuable help he can possibly supply to building up the business of his firm.

When Success Is Not Deserved

It is a miserably weak store, not worthy of existence, that is compelled to offer its customers merchandise that is not of the best standard at its price. Any merchant who will tolerate merchandise of this sort does not deserve success. He will not secure it, moreover, if he is retaining in his employ a buyer who is not capable of getting the best goods in every grade. He should get rid of such a buyer no matter what his obligations might seem to be. It is infinitely better to pay his present salary, and put him in the complaint department or give him some unimportant work to oversee in the delivery department, than to retain him in his position as buyer when he is incompetent to secure goods that will meet competition.

The first thing to establish about your store is a standard of quality in your merchandise that is above adverse criticism. You are not a true merchant if you are not doing this, and if you are doing it, then, for goodness sake, prove it to all your people in a manner that will thoroughly establish their confidence in everything that you sell! This policy will do more than anything else to increase your business, and to make your customers believe that they have secured the best goods that the money will buy.

IV

DON'T BECOME A FOLLOWER OF YOUR COMPETITOR

Be Yourself

Public respect for a store is gained only by originality. The largest profits in a business go to the store that has original methods. It is unquestionably true that many stores have conducted a profitable business by imitating successful stores. But no matter how successful an imitator may be, he is always behind the leader. The store that follows the policies and merchandising of another store is constantly under the most crucial comparisons as to its merchandise and prices. A store of this sort is the easiest kind of competition for the bigger store. The leader having greater physical strength can crush out the follower, because he always has the merchandise with which to do it, and because there is no public respect for the smaller store to protect it from the big store's onslaughts. On the other hand, the day comes when the leader weakens and employs less efficient methods, and if the follower has the habit of imitation he goes to destruction before the big competitor. Even a faithful follower should keep in his mind the possibility of some day running around the big leader and taking advantage of his weakness.

One bright stroke of originality will at times win tremendous public attention and respect. Many a small store has gained success by absolutely ignoring the methods of its big competitors, planning unique events, and merchandising them in an absolutely original manner. But there are hundreds of stores throughout the country who merchandise their business year after year on a schedule made up from the advertising

of their competitor during the preceding year. They have their calendar which says that on April first Jones and Company had a Sale of Women's Coats; on April third, a Sale of Petticoats; on April fifth, a Sale of Linens, and so the buyers in these departments are urged to prepare their sales to meet those dates, expecting that the other store will do the same thing this year as last, which may be true, because most stores get into such ruts. Thus the progress of all stores in that community is retarded. The big store follows its previous record and the competitors follow the big store.

This kind of a community is the one that is wide open for the success of the clever merchant who is looking for a city in which to establish a new business.

Originality Wins Reward

Of course, it is wise to know what your competitor is going to do if he has the follow-up habit, but it is infinitely more important for you to spend your mental and physical effort in discovering what the public is going to do on those dates, what merchandise they are going to want, what they are going to ask for, whether your stocks are complete, whether your merchandise is the best possible, whether your prices are right. Then, when you are considering what event to create to bring people to your store, decide it in reference to what the public will be most interested in at that particular moment, and let your competitor keep his eyes nailed to what he did last year.

Do the NEW thing, do the thing that will be helpful to the public, do the thing that will make customers say, "That is just what I want! I am going to hurry down first thing tomorrow morning!"

Make Competition Follow You

It is very convenient to know what your competitor is going to do; but, after you know, don't do the same thing, but

do a better thing. Use all your ingenuity and all the brains and skill of your management and your entire organization to develop bigger, better plans and more interesting merchandising and advertising events than your competitor has in mind. Make *him* follow *you*; give *him* something to worry about; make *him* keep the calendar and come after *you* next year; and next year see to it that you are miles ahead of the best work you can do this year. Make the public realize that yours is the wide-awake store and they will think better of all your merchandise events even though they are exactly the same in character and quality as those shown by your competitor. The public likes to deal with the live store. It is wonderfully easy to get its attention by live methods and interesting and original advertising.

Nine salesmen out of ten, who want to sell a big stock of goods, will go to a buyer and say "Smith, down the street, has bought heavily of these goods and you will certainly want to get a good supply." He may be clever enough to offer you different patterns, but he knows human nature and he realizes that if he tells you that your competitor selected those goods that you will think they must be all right. He knows how easy it is to make the sheep follow the leader and he makes quick sales by appealing to this human weakness. Yes, it is a fine thing to know what your competitor has purchased, but nine times out of ten the information you get from the salesman is not sound and you should not rely too strongly on it. When you do definitely know what your competitor is buying you know what you must buy *to have something better*.

There is one possible exception to the rule in the title of this chapter. If yours is a little store just beginning business in your city and you have very little money to advertise with, very little individuality in your own makeup, and are not quite certain of yourself as a merchant, it may be a good thing to follow in the footsteps of big successful concerns and take

advantage of their advertising and merchandising program and bark at their heels.

The Permanent Success

But the store that strikes right out into the middle of the stream, forgetting what its competitor is doing and keeping its mind only on what its public wants and the best methods of attracting and serving its public, will do an infinitely larger and a permanently stronger business than the store that wastes its time watching and following its competitor.

V

HOW ARE YOU EDUCATING YOUR COMMUNITY?

Through Advertising—Not Bargains Only

A year or two ago I was talking to the advertising manager of one of the large stores in the Middle West, and in discussing the advertising done in his city, he said to me, with a certain amount of apology for the advertising which I saw: "This is a bargain town and we simply have to advertise bargains, in order to get the people." I have heard this statement made dozens of times in cities all over the United States; and perhaps there is no city, anywhere, of which most of the advertising men, as well as the merchants, would not say: "This is a bargain town. We've got to advertise bargains all the time, or we couldn't get the people."

"Bargain Towns" Have Money

In looking over the advertising for department stores in the city referred to, one is given the impression that everybody there is bent on buying bargains, and that nothing else is of interest to them. Yet that same city is one of the best communities in the United States for the selling of fine merchandise. During my visit there I rode in an automobile past mile after mile of magnificent residences, in restricted streets, and in private parks, and those residences were as fine, as elegant, and as costly as most of the houses on Riverside Drive, New York.

That inspection demonstrated to me that there were vast numbers of very wealthy and well-to-do people in that city,

who not only had means, but used them for the furnishing of homes and for the apparelling of their persons.

Selling the Special Set

This same advertising manager related to me an incident which demonstrated, quite unconsciously to him, that what he had said about his city's being a "bargain town" was far from true. He said that the buyer of the linen department had asked him how he could help him sell a \$650 embroidered linen trousseau set, which had been purchased originally as a sample of embroidery work, with the expectation that orders might be taken once in a while for similar sets. It had remained in stock for more than a year and the buyer was anxious to get his money out of it, but he did not see how the \$650 trousseau set could be sold even at cost price. He was especially discouraged because of the fact that the initial "M" on it would limit the possibility of sale. The advertising manager was clever enough to see just how the set should be advertised. He illustrated the initial "M" so as to get the attention of the people who required that initial and the set was offered at \$350. At 9:30 the next morning the set was sold to a man who was very happy to secure it, because his daughter was going to be married, and the new husband's name began with "M." At 2:30 in the afternoon a man came in, who had traveled half across the state in the full expectation that he would be the only man who would want that set, and he was frightfully disappointed not to be able to secure it. During the day thirty-four inquiries were made for that set of linens.

People Want Good Goods

This incident showed most positively that people in that city would be very keen to buy their daughters a handsome wedding present of embroidered linens, if the stores had them in stock and would let them know that they existed. In my

opinion, there is no question at all that out of thirty-four applicants for the trousseau set, two would have purchased \$650 sets at the regular price, if they had been in stock, because when once they had made up their minds that a set of embroidered linens was a desirable wedding present, a good salesman could have secured their orders. In addition, it is unquestionable that four or five sets could have been sold for some price between \$350 and \$450, when such eager prospects were discovered for the salesman to work upon.

This experience conclusively proves two things:

That the decision that a certain city is a bargain town is largely a matter of superstition on the part of the advertising manager; or,

That if the people of a city do continuously demand bargains, it is because merchants and their advertising managers have used pages continuously in the newspapers to educate people to want bargains.

Stores to Blame for "Bargain" Fallacy

It is easy to understand that if practically all the merchants boost bargains all the time, and spend all their arguments to make people believe that the MOST VALUABLE QUALITY about merchandise is a BARGAIN PRICE, people will ultimately come to have the same opinion.

Merchants who pay big money for advertising really do not recognize the tremendous educational power that the advertising has. Tremendous harm has been done to good business all over the United States by the continuous exploiting of bargains in every community.

The bargain unquestionably has its place in storekeeping. It is a very logical attraction to use at certain times. It is an indispensable factor in selling out old stock and odd lots, and as such it should be given proper respect. But the merchant who comes to think that his community is a bargain

town, usually has only himself to blame for his opinion, as well as for the fact.

If that store in the western city had had the courage to keep a stock of linen trousseau sets and then to advertise them in an interesting way, exploiting the desirability of an embroidered trousseau set as a present to the bride, because of its almost life-long usefulness, there is no question but that the store would have done a very large business in trousseau sets. But instead of doing this kind of advertising, the store probably exploited 25-cent towels at 19 cents, and \$1 linens at 85 cents a yard, with expensive persistence.

Through Salespeople

Now let us turn to another side of this same matter. How are you educating the community *through your salespeople*? After the advertising, the chief education of your community, in reference to your merchandise, is done by your salespeople.

If they have the opinion that the thing they are to promote in order to make sales is bargain merchandise, the bad work that is started by poor advertising is continued by means of poor salesmanship. If, on the other hand, your salespeople are taught to appreciate new merchandise, and if they have been properly taught to realize the interest-compelling power of NEWNESS in their merchandise in attracting the attention of their customers and in selling goods, they will be able to sell goods without the allurements of reduced prices.

Showing Good Points of Good Goods

There is nothing more vital in building up your business and increasing your profits than carrying out this policy of SELLING NEW GOODS both in your advertising and in your selling. There are stores all over the country where the salespeople are almost afraid to show customers anything which

isn't reduced in price, and it is usually the fault of the merchant or his manager. It is so easy for salespeople to get started off with one idea in their minds and then to live with that idea the rest of their lives. For this reason the right educational work with the salespeople is vital to the selling of profitable goods.

The merchant and his manager must look seriously upon the work of educating the salespeople, because when they think of it they can't fail to realize that their salespeople are largely responsible for making their customers what they are. The selling force can make a store a success or a failure, unless the merchandise is so organized that it sells itself. This might be possible if everything were trade-marked and if the merchant were boosting trade-marked merchandise alone. But where there is so much merchandise that is unknown and the merits of which are not realized by the public, it is vital to show the goods, explain their merits and their uses, and fill customers with a desire for them. This means intelligent and well-educated salesmanship. It also requires a continuous effort on the part of the merchant, his managers, and his buyers.

Knowledge Brings Enthusiasm

ENTHUSIASM is one of the most vital factors in all sorts of selling. In some people enthusiasm is constant, but in the vast majority, remember, it is a rare possession and must constantly be stimulated by the effort of the merchant and his managers.

It is so easy for all merchandise, no matter how unusual, to become commonplace in the eyes of the salespeople. They see it day after day. It loses its interest for them and they no longer speak enthusiastically about it to their customers. But if the general manager, his assistants, and the buyers, do their part in renewing the enthusiasm about the goods, the

salesmanship of the organization will be tremendously improved. Now the fact is that every piece of merchandise in stock has a romantic story that can be told, and this story must be dug out and must be told over and over again to the salespeople. The brightest men in the organization must point out the reasons why the goods should be desired by hundreds of people. Methods should be suggested for presenting the argument to the customers who come to the counters.

Educate Your Selling Force—Bigger Business

In many stores this work is being done continuously. But in by far the largest proportion of stores there is practically no educational work done at all to aid the salespeople. That is the reason why only the simple sorts of merchandise are sold in large quantities and why so little of the better and more profitable merchandise is sold.

Today the merchant who would make the largest success and the largest volume of sales and profits, must accept his responsibility for *educating his public*. This means *educating his salespeople* who come in direct contact with the customers who come into his store. If this work is neglected, the merchant becomes discouraged with the business he does. If the proper effort is made to educate the salespeople and the public, gratifying results are sure to follow.

VI

DO YOUR GOODS GROW COMMONPLACE TO YOU?

Use the Customer's Eyes

In studying the problems of many merchants throughout the country, I have found that, in almost every sort of retail business there is a tremendous amount of inertia.

I do not mean that merchants or their advertising men in general show any sign of laziness or carelessness. As a rule a very large percentage of them are keen, eager, earnest, and efficient in the work they do. But frequently they are working tremendously hard *in a rut*. This is quite a natural condition, when you realize that the owners, managers, and promoters of a store usually see the same goods in the same place day after day, until they become quite commonplace in their eyes. This fact, that people become hardened to the things they see daily around them, accounts for a certain lack of enthusiasm, which is so vital to the promotion of business, as well as to the creation of live and resultful advertising.

The Charm of Novelty

If we could fully realize how ETERNALLY NEW candy is to every child, regardless of the fact that it has been manufactured in the same form for a generation—if we could realize, as the department store merchant usually does realize, the continuous attraction about apparel to women—if the hardware dealer could keep in his mind the fact that nothing is more interesting to the man who comes into his store than the staple implement that he some day intends to buy—it would be easier to be enthusiastic in both selling and advertising.

Perhaps everyone on earth can, at one time or another, be tremendously interested in *what he hasn't got*. This will be doubly true if attention is called to this article impressively, on frequent occasions. When this fact is fully realized, the merchant will more highly appreciate these important injunctions:

1. *Do Not Hide Your Goods on Your Shelves.* While it is necessary to store goods on the shelves between times, always keep in mind the vital necessity of bringing them out on the counters frequently, and showing them in your windows at intervals not too far apart.

2. *Do Not Act As Though It Didn't Matter Whether People Bought Your Goods or Not.* One of the common attitudes of salespeople is so fatal that it seems almost incredible that merchants will endure it, and yet you will see it every day, even in the best stores.

A customer asks for a certain article and when some remark is made, this salesperson is very liable to say, "Yes, it is a very good article. I am sure you will like it." But the statement will be made in such a commonplace, lackadaisical manner, that the customer will not be impressed with any particular need for it.

On the other hand a live salesperson by word and manner will impress the customer with the fact that the article asked for is definitely a thing that should be possessed by the customer. It is this attitude and the manner of expressing a comment about an article, that usually determines whether the customer will buy it, or put off the purchase.

Instead of an attitude of indifference, the good salesperson will often express amazement that the article has not been purchased before and in this manner far more effectively stimulate the desire for immediate possession than by the strongest argument. When the impression is given that your goods are vital to the comfort or safety of the prospective

customer, she will begin to believe that she really needs them. In this way the sale may be closed.

Sense the Customer's Needs

People constantly neglect to realize their need of things. For instance the hardware department seems like a dull place. Usually only the most commonplace advertising is done, and it attracts very little attention. To arouse a man's interest you should make some such suggestion as this:

"When you want to use a Hatchet do you find that the blade is nicked and that it is in a bad condition to do good work with?

"And when you want to use a Saw do you find that it is bent where it buckled when you used it before, so that when you have an important piece of work to do, it sticks and stops instead of cutting smoothly and easily? This is because you do not have the proper tools.

"Here are thoroughly good Hatchets of the best steel, at \$1.50, and Saws that will always be a satisfaction to you for the work you want to do around your home, at \$1.75 each."

Exactly the same method should be applied to merchandise in every other department. The advertising man should study each line of goods and consider what its condition is likely to be in the home. Table linens and towels are likely to be wearing thin in spots and this should be suggested in order to make housekeepers realize their need for new linens. Stockings are liable to be darned so often that it is a waste of time and labor instead of a matter of thrift, to mend them. A suggestion to that effect would encourage people to buy new ones earlier than they would otherwise make the purchase. You need simply point out the condition that is likely

to exist in any chiffonier, or bureau drawer, or in any stocking bag in order to make people realize that they need new stockings at that particular time.

Imagine Home Conditions

This is the key to the situation throughout the entire store—instead of talking about the cold, technical facts in reference to the goods on your shelves, think more definitely about the condition of the supply of these particular goods in the homes where you wish to sell them. Call people's attention to the conditions that create the need for them. Thus there will be introduced into the minds of readers a new kind of desire, which will bring largely increased sales.

Masterly French Salesmanship

I am going to illustrate this point by telling the story of the remarkable salesmanship which I witnessed in the Louvre Department Store in Paris some years ago. I went into this great store one morning with a banker from San Francisco and his son. My friend wanted to buy merely two or three pairs of automobile goggles. He had seen goggles that one of his friends had purchased at the Louvre, and while in Paris he wanted to secure several pairs.

Upon entering the building, we were approached by a very clever head salesman, whose business it was to watch for Americans and not only give them courteous attention and service, but naturally, to sell them all the merchandise possible. He spoke perfect English, was affable and tactfully polite. He conducted us to the counter where the goggles were sold, stayed with us, and aided in the sale.

After a half-dozen pairs were purchased, and as we were near the glove counter, he made the suggestion that perhaps we might like to take back one or more pairs of gloves to the ladies at home—that gloves of their make were famous all

over the world and very well known in America. This is the fact, as every man who deals in gloves will recognize.

Helpful Suggestions

This suggestion of the ladies at home and their appreciation of gloves was pleasing to the banker, because he was very much interested in souvenirs for home. He had let the salesman know previously that he was almost ready to take the boat.

Upon looking over the gloves, he bought several pairs in various colors for his wife. Then he felt that he should take others for his daughters. His selection amounted to just a dozen pairs, in one of the finest grades of kid.

Having learned that the banker had a wife and daughters, the salesman, in the most tactful and interesting manner, pointed to certain displays of lingerie about the store, and spoke of the fact that at that time there was a Special Exhibition Sale of very beautiful garments, and that doubtless the banker's wife and daughters would very greatly appreciate his thoughtfulness in bringing them a few pieces of lingerie from Paris.

This suggestion also favorably impressed the banker, because he realized that it was definitely true. Certainly nothing that was brought from Paris would appeal more to the women at home than several dainty garments thoughtfully selected while there.

After being shown the displays on the second floor, the banker desired to take along so many beautiful things which he felt would be exactly adapted to the needs and desires of his wife and daughters, that he made quite extensive purchases.

When we finally left the store, the bill paid in cash by the banker amounted to almost \$300. Yet he had gone into that store with no thought of making any purchases beyond about two dollars' worth of goggles!

Tact Sells and Pleases

This is an illustration of how crude most salesmanship is in the United States. We are so much afraid of pestering people that we have not learned how to be really pleasing to them. This American, so far from being pestered, went home with a new feeling of delight about the prospect of the pleasure that he was going to give to his family when he arrived. The salesman had not only made a large and valuable sale for his store, but he had rendered a very definite service and his clever suggestions enabled this banker to go home giving an impression to his wife and daughters that he had been tremendously more thoughtful than he actually had been. Not, of course, that he was forgetful of his family, but he did not happen to have sufficient imagination to think of taking home gloves and lingerie, and he welcomed instantly the opportunity to add that much more pleasure to his home-coming.

Think for the Customer

This should be the keynote, the basis of all good salesmanship. The person who has the opportunity of serving a customer should make the selling attack from the point of service. The argument in selling merchandise should be to present the goods with a suggestion that is full of HUMAN NATURE and which will present the attractions of the merchandise from the viewpoint of the purchaser, rather than from the viewpoint of the seller.

Most salespeople go through life with the wrong attitude of mind. If once they could get their minds turned around in the direction that has been suggested above, they would develop extraordinary ability and salesmanship would become an ever-increasing delight, because it would be not only more resultful in sales, but would render a far larger measure of service to people to whom the goods were sold.

VII

ELIMINATE CRITICISM OF YOUR STORE

That "Little Bit of Bad"

Whether the reader of this is a merchant who is careless because he has no apparent competition, or the best and most wide-awake merchant in America, costly criticism is constantly being expressed about his store that needs to be wiped out by eliminating the menacing cause. Any merchant would be amazed if he could know actually what people are thinking and saying about his goods, his service, and his business methods. He would often be astounded to learn about just complaints for bad service and weaknesses of stocks that he never knew existed. "There's a little bit of bad in every good little girl" states a fatal truism that may be directly applied to the best stores. How amazingly that "little bit of bad" develops into faults and errors that seem to blacken out all the good in the mind of the customer who has been offended, annoyed and inconvenienced the fault!

Helpful Investigation

Recently I have been reading about an investigation made by the board of trade of a certain small city, in which they sought to discover why so many people were going to other nearby cities to do their buying, and why so many other people in the city and in the country adjacent were doing their buying from mail order houses. They got some information that surprised the merchants. Yet exactly the same criticisms would apply to stores in any city in America. Many of the complaints reminded me of those made against stores with which I was formerly connected. The good store, as well as

the bad one, must expect such criticisms. But, if it **is to** be successful, it is going to watch its complaints every day and constantly *cure the faults and weaknesses* as they are discovered. It can't cure them if it doesn't find them, and it will never find them unless it constantly uses all its resources to uncover them and ferret out the causes of the trouble. Then the fault must be cured, for the complaining customer is watching to see whether you deserve to get her back, and she will judge you by what you do with the fault that upset her.

The following are some of the complaints sent to that board of trade. Are you SURE that none of them might be causes of complaint against YOUR store?

Incomplete varieties in women's apparel; also in men's shirts, knit underwear, and children's wear.

Stores cater to cheap trade only.

Salespeople do not know their goods.

Had to wait too long to be served.

Clerks offended customers by talking about them.

Prices were too high.

Stores and goods did not seem inviting to them.

Children imposed upon and not served promptly.

Merchant agreed to order goods not in stock, but did not.

Stores did not have customer's size, as only most popular sizes were kept.

Clerks "visit" each other, instead of waiting on customers promptly.

Delivery service unreliable—packages badly handled.

Does the Glove Fit You?

Can you check down the entire list, and be certain that these faults do not exist in your store? If there are any doubtful points, make sure about them and cure them, before they begin to cost you money and customers. New customers do not come fast enough for any store to afford to lose a single profitable customer. Why not make an energetic and thor-

ough campaign on your own account to learn what faults your store has, or what faults your public thinks exist in reference to your goods and service. The result may be invaluable to you in many ways.

Two Methods of Investigation

There are several ways to conduct such an investigation. Perhaps the best method is by sending competent and tactful people from door to door to get replies to a standard set of questions. They may cover your entire community, or you may send them only to a limited number of sufficiently representative people of various classes, including both customers of your store and people who do not buy from you. The other method is less expensive and in some respects very valuable—the request for information by mail.

If your letter of inquiry is sent out generally it will create wide and favorable comment, because of your evident desire to cure all causes of complaints. It will be good general publicity. It will mollify customers who are given a chance to air grievances that they have been stewing about. It will make others, who have no real grievances, begin to ask themselves why they have not bought goods from your store. They may decide to go and see what you have and how you serve them, since you have such good intentions, as your letter will express. Then, as you will not require a signature, you will get a lot of real honest criticism and information that would not be given if somebody had to be faced, or if the name was signed to the complaint. Then you may get some good news also, if you deserve it. Some of it may be worth quoting in your advertising in the valuable way that such compliments are quoted by John Wanamaker.

This is the letter that I should send, enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Naturally you would not want the complaints written on a postal card to save one cent on each.

DEAR MADAM :—

We are constantly trying to improve the merchandise and the service of our store. This means the correcting of faults and shortcomings that exist. Naturally our customers are in far better position to learn what is wrong with our store, than we are. Things usually go right when the firm is around, but we cannot know when our customers fail to get completely satisfactory service, unless our customers tell us every time they are annoyed or disappointed. For our benefit, will you do us the great favor of filling in the answers to the questions below, and then add any other remarks that may be useful to us, or tell us why you criticise our store? Of course, you do not need to sign your name, unless there is something we can do for you, or some amends that we can make for dissatisfaction caused.

1. Where does our merchandise fail to meet your desires?*
2. Wherein is our service unsatisfactory to you?
3. Do you find our salespeople intelligent and courteous?
4. Are our goods as desirable as those you find elsewhere?
5. Are our prices as low as those you find in other stores?
6. Do you think there is an advantage in buying in other cities?
7. Do you buy any goods from mail order houses? If so, WHY?
8. Is there anything that we can do for you today?
9. If we don't have what you want in stock, we'll get it for you.
10. We'll make this store satisfy you in every way, if it is humanly possible, if you'll help us by telling us what you want and how we can serve you better.

Faithfully yours,

.....

*Leave ample space between questions to fill in replies.

VIII

TAKE TIME FREQUENTLY TO ANALYZE YOUR DEPARTMENTS

Beware of "Pet" Departments

Nothing is more vital in building up a larger volume of sales for a business than watching the health and growth of all departments of the store. There are many reasons for this—two chiefly: first, to get the largest possible volume of sales out of your business; second, to eliminate the actual damage that weak and badly managed departments always do to the general business.

It is a habit of most merchants to pay their large attention to the profitable departments that are bringing in big sales. They put their best people in them. They spend their advertising money for them. They give the best floor space in the store to them. Frequently they overlook entirely the unsuccessful departments, because they are not profitable. Of course, I believe very thoroughly in pushing the departments that have won public approval. I never believe in letting a department drift because it is able to take care of itself. I do not want to be put in the position of criticising any merchant for pushing any favorite department to the utmost that it will do. That is good business and it is often vital to the success of the store. But with all this being done, I want to urge in the most emphatic manner possible, the vital importance of going over the weak departments several times each year.

Study the Small Departments

The first of June is a vastly better time than the first of August to analyze department figures, because you are nearer

to the live season and are able to make investigations about the selling before the salespeople and the buyers have forgotten too much. Wherever you find one department that does not seem to be doing its proportionate share in producing sales, there is a definite reason for the shortcoming, although you may not at once find that reason. It may very likely be a lack of skill or aggressiveness on the part of the buyer. On the other hand the fault may not be with the buyer, but with the firm.

They May Make "Good-Will"

Many a merchant assumes that various buyers in his store are quite insignificant, because of their small sales. Accordingly he gives them little consideration in conference, in store spaces, and in advertising appropriation. This is absolute shortsightedness, because there are in every store from one to a half-dozen departments contributing small sales and small profits, and doing as much to establish good-will and prestige for the store as the big departments that are making large sales and large profits. There is many a notion department that is making people decide to go to that store, because the stock is always complete and always has the best necessities and conveniences—the right needles and pins are always on hand; spool cotton can always be got there, and the prices are always lowest. The customer who goes to that store to be certain of getting just what she wants in the notion department, will also go to that store when she wants to buy a new suit or coat. Many a store is losing business in its ready-to-wear departments, in its linen and carpet departments, because the stocks of hosiery, or notions, or ribbons, are starved.

The Good "All-Round" Store

It is vital in successful storekeeping that you give good all round service to your customers. The only way to be sure of

holding your trade is by conducting a store that meets all the requirements of the people who patronize you. The moment that your customers have to go to your competitor's store in order to get some little article that they need and can't find in your stocks, that moment they begin to have more respect for your competitor than they have for you. There are hundreds of otherwise good stores all over the country which are losing customers every day, because the little departments, that pay small profits, are not actively merchandised and are not given their proper opportunity to build good-will for the store by being a convenience to the store's customers. On the other hand, hundreds of merchants are overlooking the tremendous possibilities of these departments that are frequently despised. Woolworth has made his millions largely because department stores were asleep to the possibilities of little things. And yet it has been an axiom in storekeeping for generations that success was made by "quick sales and small profits."

Give Weak Ones a Chance

There is probably no department in your store today, no matter how insignificant it looks in sales and profits, that could not do a very valuable and important part in profit-making, if it were given the chance. The month of June is a splendid time to begin this experiment, and the summer months are the ones that most need the help that the departments devoted to little things can give. When you are not able to sell women's suits and coats, and men's clothing, and furniture, your counters of small wares and your departments of merchandise that are despised during the busy season, have large possibilities of development and each will contribute toward a total which in ten different departments will make a very gratifying volume.

Look over your sales sheets today and pick out the de-

partments that you wish you did not have to take care of. First, analyze them by their importance in serving your customers—just what have customers a right to expect from the little department that doesn't pay? Then investigate the matter fully, until you know whether your customers are getting everything that they have a right to expect to get from that department. If they are not, you may be sure there is grave damage being done to your business every day, by the neglect of proper service, for which that little department is responsible.

If Sick, You Want to Know It

On the other hand, find out what articles customers ask for in that department that they do not get. Get your salespeople to speak frankly to you and don't criticise them if they are outspoken in *their* criticisms of the department's management. They can tell you what customers ask for and don't get. They can probably tell you what people can get in the same department in some other store but can't get from you. Then visit one of the live Woolworth stores and see what is being offered at the five and ten cent counters that you might as well be selling at a nice profit in your store. Get down off your high horse and put in a fine window of small wares at attractive prices, and see how the volume of sales will jump up in the department that has been cheated and starved to death in the past. You will begin to realize that instead of being a detriment and damage to your store, the little department may become one of the most helpful in the matter of making real profits at small expense.

Study the Big Ones Too

In your analysis, do not confine yourself to the study of the small and unprofitable departments. It is also important to see where you over-bought and where you under-bought.

There is a great deal of merchandise that must be ordered in advance, in order to have sufficient stock to take care of your trade. Where did you fall down this year? How many thousands of dollars did you lose by not having the merchandise that people asked for? On the other hand, what have you got in your stocks that is worrying you right now? Where are you overstocked and why? Perhaps there is still time to clean up a lot of the departments and the more exact you are in the analysis of stock at this moment, the less you will have to do in inventory month. But always keep in mind the fact that it is just as important to the success of your business to supply the little necessities that customers have a right to get from you, as it is to make the big sales, because people will not come to your store in the largest numbers to buy the big things, unless you earn their good will by supplying in complete assortments the little things that they need every day.

The Complete Store Pays

Nothing is more provoking than to go to a store in a hurry for some little thing and fail to find it and be compelled to go to another store. This is one of the surest ways of driving a customer out of your store and soliciting trade for your competitor. It is not necessary, with proper intelligence, to carry high stocks in order to have a complete store. An absolutely perfect assortment of the little things runs into very little money. But to starve stocks of a few hundred dollars' worth of necessities because you have several thousand dollars tied up in bad merchandise, means the sure wrecking of any business. It means a definite reduction in sales possibilities all the time.

Do not have weak departments. Do not turn a deaf ear to the appeals of the managers of these little departments when they need help; for though they are not making big profits for you they may be voicing the appeal of your best customers.

When you do not listen to these earnest arguments from the non-profitable departments, you are gradually closing the door to some of the most valuable sources of information as to the demands of your best trade.

IX

PUTTING NEW "PEP" INTO SLUGGISH DEPARTMENTS

Don't Have a Lop-Sided Store

It is not enough to *think* about your weak departments. You must *do* something. The habit of accepting conditions that grow around the business is absolutely fatal to the building up of a larger volume of sales. Most merchants give a worried thought, now and then, to the departments that are not doing what they should. But they are always inclined to pass along to something else that needs their immediate attention, and so the dead or sick department stays in the morgue or the hospital.

This is why so many businesses grow "lop-sided." The merchant follows the line of least resistance. He speeds up his business in the direction that it seems to want to run, and frequently neglects entirely the many other lines of possible healthy growth. Of course, as suggested in the preceding chapter, it would be foolish in the extreme not to push the successful departments to the limit. There is where the big immediate money is made. Their growth adds to the prestige and power of the whole business. But, between times, it is most important that constructive work should be done in the departments that are lagging, so that they may be developed into bigger sales-winners and larger profit-makers.

Corsets, for Instance

Take the corset department as an illustration. A lot of stores keep corsets because they think they have to, not be-

cause they are making any profits out of them. Yet corsets may be made to be very good money-makers. The chief trouble about the usual corset department is that it is rarely advertised. When it is advertised, there is printed a list of various kinds of corsets, without any special boosting of any particular sort. This sort of advertising *doesn't sell goods*. It doesn't make a woman anxious to buy a new corset. It doesn't make her dissatisfied with her present corset or feel upset about her smart appearance until she gets a new one. Yet these results are easy to obtain.

I believe that every store in America, on the average, should sell *twice as many corsets* as it is now selling. That means that many stores should sell *four or five times as many* as they now do. That is not any exaggeration. Here are the facts: It is estimated that there are about eleven million women wearing corsets in the United States. Yet there are *less than ten million corsets sold each year!* Not one pair a year to each woman! Think of it!

Women Don't Realize Their Need

When you consider how many women *do* wear three and four pairs, you have to recognize the fact that *many thousands of women make one pair of corsets last for two or three years!* It isn't poverty that causes a half or a quarter of this parsimonious buying of corsets on the part of thousands of women. It is sheer downright thoughtlessness and careless habits on the part of most of them. They put on the same old corset, day after day, because it is there; because it is still holding together, and no merchant, in his advertising has suggested that *a new corset would give the woman the appearance of being more smartly dressed* than the old one, from which all the graceful lines have been pulled out long ago. She doesn't see a handsomely illustrated advertisement exploiting such facts as these:

"THESE NEW CALLOT CORSETS
MAKE THE OLD GOWN LOOK SMART AND NEW."

"THE CALLOT CORSET
MAKES THE MATURE FIGURE YOUTHFUL."

"PERHAPS IT'S AN OUT-WORN CORSET
THAT MAKES YOUR DRESSES SET SO BADLY."

"MANY A GOOD DRESSMAKER IS BLAMED
FOR THE BAD LINES OF A CORSET
THAT HAS BEEN WORN TOO LONG."

"THE DAINTY WOMAN IS AS FASTIDIOUS ABOUT HER CORSET
AS SHE IS ABOUT THE CORSET COVER."

Show Them!

The store's advertising should propagate the idea continuously, that it is *not refined* for a woman to wear a corset that has become soiled from long usage—that it destroys all the daintiness of the other lingerie that she keeps neat and clean. She should be made to *feel* constantly *uneasy* about the appearance of her gowns and suits, when they are worn over *corsets that have lost their original smartness of style*. This sort of advertising should easily *double the corset business* that most stores are now doing—chiefly because it will, for the first time, make women think about corsets in a more definite manner. It will jolt their carelessness. It will make them look for their defects. It will help to destroy their contentment with old and outworn corsets.

Have a "Leader"

Then, I very strongly advise merchants to make a leader of some special line of corsets. When showing a half-dozen

varieties in the same manner, *they all seem commonplace*. But when you are willing to boost one particular corset, your customers have more confidence in it and they develop more desire to buy it. Of course you should actually select the line you think best, before you center your effort upon it. Then you should arrange to get from that manufacturer all the intensive selling helps that most progressive corset manufacturers are always glad to supply to dealers.

You will get pamphlets to distribute in every house in your community. *Every house contains one or more corset wearers*. In this pamphlet, particularly, you can print a special article, as though it were quoted from a fashion magazine, telling about how fatal it is to a good dresser to wear her corset too long; how vital it is to the snap and smartness of the gown or suit, to have *a new and perfect corset* for dress-up wear. Then another paragraph should impress the woman with the fact that nothing so definitely destroys the daintiness and cleanliness of the apparel as the wearing of a corset that bears the soil of age.

This sort of campaign will change every woman reader's conception about her corset and will make her realize that she is either missing something important about her appearance, or is absolutely negligent in her habits, if she does not buy a new corset more often. This is CREATIVE ADVERTISING. It shows how futile it is to print merely conventional words in your newspaper announcements. It should point out the way to sell more goods.

Other Sluggish Departments—Use Your Brains

The same kind of work should be done for muslin underwear, silk petticoats, house dresses (why should a woman permit herself to wear such dowdy, faded, unattractive wrappers about the home, where neighbors are so likely to drop in, when smart, shapely dresses, durable as well as attractive, can

be bought for so little?), then knit underwear, hosiery, and the like. Don't ever accept the idea that people want only just so much of any kind of goods. Almost always *it depends upon the merchant and his advertising*, as to how much people will buy of any sort of commodity.

You simply must not permit your customers to wear their clothing and use their housefurnishings to a frazzle before they become discontented with them. You must make your goods so alluring that people will be unhappy until they are able to buy them. You must devise a way to *make people buy oftener*. There is always a way, if you put your brains to work to thinking it out. The easiest way to win BIG INCREASE IN SALES is probably in your sluggish departments, where you've given neither the goods nor the buyer a chance.

Use the Quiet Time to Plan

Make use of the lull during the quiet days of January, February, July, and August to plan new methods of putting life and interest into the departments that need help. Try out the corset plan. Get some aggressive manufacturer back of you with his co-operation, and be ready for a bigger corset business next season. You may find that the interest that you create among women, in reference to your new corset ideas, may bring you a lot more business in your coats and suits.

X

IT IS A MERCHANDISING CRIME TO BE "OUT OF GOODS" IN SEASON

Bad Use of a Good Policy

The modern policy of carrying small stocks and getting frequent shipments of goods is absolutely sound merchandising; it prevents tying up capital needlessly; it protects the merchant from accumulating heavy stocks; it keeps the goods fresh for customers; it makes everybody in the store think of the line as being active and good stock. Yet this policy which creates such a healthful and inspiring, as well as profitable condition, may become a menace to the reputation of any store. No policy is so good that some merchant cannot handle it stupidly and make it result in harm. This splendid merchandising policy, which is doing such handsome work in scores of stores that handle it intelligently and scientifically, is working disaster for hundreds of stores that are foolishly OVERWORKING IT.

BRAINS, FORETHOUGHT, and carefully worked out PLANS are the constant requirements of good storekeeping. You can't blunder along into success in retailing these days. Too many other bright men are in the game, and keen to take advantage of any mistakes you may make. There is scarcely any mistake so far-reaching in its effect, and so annoying to customers, as to have them come to your store for goods that they have a right to find, and be told: "We are just out of those goods, but we'll probably have them in tomorrow or next week."

The only way to sell goods is to have them in stock. You

can't sell goods that haven't even been ordered from the manufacturer or the jobber. This thing of "sending things around next week" to people who want to buy them today is *ALL WRONG* in storekeeping. Any merchant with live storekeeping experience knows that people who are "all stirred up" about buying a thing today, may have lost all interest in it tomorrow. The time to get the money is *when people's pocketbooks are open*. Not after they are shut up tight, or the money spent for something else that tomorrow will be sure to suggest.

Have the Goods to Get the Money

If there is one thing that merchandising experience has *proved past all argument*, it is that *people change their minds quickly*. The fish is not more prone to "slip off the hook," than the customer to get away without the sale's being made. What a pity, then, when the customer asks for the goods, not to be able to wrap up the articles and take the money! And it is just as much loss to YOU, to have the customer go to your competitor for the goods, as to forget that she wants the goods at all—even more, in fact. It gives your competitor his big chance to demonstrate that he has *a more complete store than you*. It makes no difference if you have twice as much capital tied up in stock, if you do not have the wanted goods when they are asked for.

In January you may be forgiven for being out of certain things, but *NOT IN MARCH AND APRIL*, when stocks are full and complete in every detail in the well-kept store. The merchant who tells people that he hasn't got in stock the goods that they want is *simply driving his customers to his competitors*. This wretched stock condition is being caused today in otherwise wide-awake stores, by small-quantity buying, which in itself, is one of the best policies ever devised for better storekeeping. When it is operated in a careless manner it will kill more trade than it will conserve capital to pay for.

Fatal Stockkeeping

The merchant or buyer who can't manipulate his stock so that he will neither be "out of stock," nor filled up with more staple goods than he can sell out within the month, *has a lot to learn* about placing orders and keeping stock. I went into a store the other day to get a Rubberset Tooth Brush, medium, a tube of Kolynos, a stick of Williams Shaving Soap, and a pair of 4/4 shoe strings. All four of these staple articles were "out of stock," but they expected them in "tomorrow"! This was a positive demonstration of WRETCHED STOREKEEPING. They were all things that any customer has a right to expect to find in any complete store on any day of any month in the year. All are in constant use, winter and summer; the need as well as the purchase may come any day, and should be supplied by any well-kept store even on the day before inventory.

Don't Drive Customers to Competitors

Nothing is more important at this moment, than to give an inspection test to every department in your store, to prove that you can meet every reasonable demand for staple and seasonable goods. Every spot in your store, where you are out of stock, is doing you a certain amount of injury every hour. Every disappointed customer gets a harsh jolt to her confidence in your store. This is the kind of damage that HURTS. You should protect your store's reputation by prompt and thorough action to prevent the damage from going further. Some things can always be obtained quickly and regularly, and they may be safely purchased in limited lots with frequent shipments. But other goods, that are sure to be wanted, may require preparation, and no chance should be taken about getting them in stock on time. Other goods are in big demand at certain times—and *must be there when wanted*—or the sales will be LOST.

No Game for a "Piker"

The worst and most hopeless "piker" in the storekeeping game is the man who hasn't enough courage to buy the goods that his trade is going to demand, and to have them in stock when they are wanted. Storekeeping success requires COURAGE—not rashness, not speculation. It is not gambling to have a little more stock of live merchandise than your trade will demand, for you can always do a little advertising to sweep out any small surplus of almost anything. Having ENOUGH is always safe. That is a totally different proposition from plunging.

The shrewd manufacturer who loads up a merchant is often his best friend, if he loads him up at the right time, and with the right goods. Some merchants have to get a REAL SCARE in their systems in order to *push sales properly*. And many don't get going until they are afraid that they will get stuck. No smart manufacturer will load up a merchant with goods that he thinks he can't sell—for two reasons:

1. It would lead the merchant to cut the price and spoil the manufacturer's market.
2. It would kill off a customer for future business.

No manufacturer, who expects to stay in business, wants to do either of these things. But it is to the manufacturer's interest to spur the dealer to push the sale of his goods. That interest is mutual if the dealer does the pushing at the right time, in the right way, *and makes a profit on the goods sold*.

Don't Miss the Sure Profits

Buy the goods that you safely can in little lots and frequent shipments. But don't be out of staple goods or seasonable goods for a day or an hour when the goods are in demand. Don't fail to order, in plenty of time, all goods that have to be specially prepared for you. Don't be a "piker" about *stocking*

up with plenty of the goods which are going to command a big sale for their season, or some special occasion. The merchant who fails to be ready to supply the goods which his customers are coming of themselves to buy, or which under the proper stimulus, they can be readily brought into his store to buy, is *missing one of the biggest sources of sure profit* that store-keeping creates. This is the easy money that merchandising preparedness earns at small cost and with the least possible effort and risk.

XI

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR STORE'S PREPARED- NESS WHEN STOCKS ARE FULL

The Whole Must Be Greater Than Its Parts

If there is ever a time in the whole round year, when you are equipped to make new friends and prestige for your store, it is in the middle of April or October, when your stocks are largest and most interesting, and everybody is eager to buy the new things. And if there is going to be any season of BIG SELLING for you during the round year, then, in April or October will be the time to separate people from their money, while giving them merchandise that will delight and satisfy them.

Most merchants and advertising men—following the line of least resistance urged upon them by the various buyers—will be so busy rushing the merchandise offerings into the newspaper space, that they will *forget to advertise the store*. Of course, you must not miss telling any part of the wonderful story of every good line of merchandise in your stocks. That is vital. But you must do the other also. Every word you print about the preparedness, the completeness, the efficiency of your whole store will only emphasize the desirability and value of every line of merchandise that is also advertised.

There is not a store anywhere, no matter how well merchandised and operated, that does not sometimes suffer criticism, often very serious criticism, because it has failed to supply the merchandise or service that was expected at a time when its stocks were low, or some of its people away on a vacation.

Off-Season Criticism

The public is sometimes downright inconsiderate and often quite thoughtless. The customer at the counter is thinking only of herself and her needs. She does not stop to think that it is the middle of July and that she should not expect to find just the things she wants at that moment. She did want some merchandise very badly and in a hurry, the day was hot and she did not want to go to another store to get it. When your store fails perhaps to meet her needs that provokes her, and the unpleasant weather exaggerates the inconvenience enormously. She goes home and very likely tells some of her friends how annoyed she was because you did not have such a simple thing as the article she wanted. This is human nature. Such a mischance happens even to good stores all the time.

You can take it for granted that there are hundreds of people in your community who at this moment feel that yours is a very unsatisfactory store, and that it is out of merchandise just when people want it. But human nature is changeable and it is often possible to completely revolutionize people's feelings toward certain stores. The happy moment to change this impression in the mind of every person you can bring into your store is in October or April, when *your store is at its best*; the stocks are complete; your salespeople are not worn out by the hard work of the whole season. They have come back perhaps refreshed from their summer vacations. The merchandise looks new and attractive to them; everything looks fresh and clean and desirable. They will have more enthusiasm in their work, because they know that everybody will be interested in the new things.

With the merchandise at its top-notch, with your salespeople at their best, with the whole store organization ready to give the most complete satisfaction of the whole year—*then is the time for you to go on dress parade.*

Compel a Fairer Inspection

You must get the people into your store while it is at its best. You must make a very emphatic determination to get everybody into your building whom it is possible to bring in. The merchant, the advertising manager, the general manager, and every responsible person in your entire organization, must have this thought in mind, and do everything possible to this end. Your advertising must be filled with enthusiastic invitations, which will arouse the curiosity of the people in your city and make them want to come and see your store. You must forget that you ever had a bad piece of merchandise, that you ever gave poor service, or that you ever had a disgruntled customer.

You are now prepared to delight every visitor to the store with the new things that you have to show. You are prepared to meet every reasonable requirement in the way of merchandise. You are prepared to give the best service.

The Way To Go About It

The only thing that remains is to get people there. To this end you must make your store, throughout, as attractive as is possible, with complete displays of your merchandise. You must have your windows beautifully decorated with the new goods. They must be made so alluring that people will be impelled by looking in the windows, to come into the store to see more of the merchandise and to ask questions about it and buy it.

But above all, you must do the best advertising of your store history, right now. Advertise the individual merchandise stocks, in the strongest possible manner. But in every advertisement tell the strongest possible story about the store as a whole, and the interest that it holds at this moment for every member of the community.

Here is copy for such an announcement:

Test This Store NOW!

We cordially invite every man and woman of our city and vicinity to visit our store **THIS WEEK.**

Today stocks are at their best and fullest—the top-notch of variety and completeness of the whole year.

That is why we are asking you to do us the courtesy of making a visit at this time.

Perhaps there have been times when we did not have in stock exactly the thing that you desired. Careful storekeeping requires that stocks be run down very low at certain seasons, and you may have misjudged us at such a time.

Today we have no excuses to make.

Our stocks are new and complete. The handsomest and most fashionable goods are here, and all the staple articles that you have a right to expect are in full supply.

You'll be interested in what you see.

You'll be pleased with the service you receive.

You'll be gratified by the moderateness of the prices.

Kindly do us the honor of **TESTING THIS STORE NOW.**

This advertisement may go across the full top of the page or as an editorial at the side; but print it large enough to be seen and easily read, and follow the spirit of this copy in your other announcements throughout the month. Stir up your whole community to the fact that you have wonderful stocks, that you have everything that is new, and that everything has been carefully selected. Urge them to come and see your store during the height of the season, while it is at its best.

You Will Be Judged at Your Best

This is the strongest possible way to make immediate sales. But it will do infinitely more by making people judge you at this moment when you are at your best, and it will help them to remember later on, when they are disappointed at not finding what they want, that at the first of the season your store was complete, and that all the goods they had a right to expect were there when they were most wanted. It is the healthy kind of advertising to do in building up the prestige of the store, and it is the strongest possible way to bring in direct sales during the harvest month of October.

XII

THE PROBLEM OF RETURNED GOODS

The Cost of "Returns"

There is a determined movement among merchants all over the United States to curtail the volume of returned goods taken back by stores each year. The amount of returned goods today is so tremendous that in many stores one-third of the work of the delivery department, the shipping rooms, and the inspectors, is devoted to an absolute waste. Even conservative stores now find that 20 per cent of their merchandise is returned. This leaves 80 per cent sold.

It has been definitely shown that the work of bringing back merchandise is even more laborious and costly on the part of the delivery department and the people who handle the goods, than the original sending out of the goods, so that the 20 per cent of "returns" is doubled in the work of the delivery department, making 40 per cent of the goods sold to be handled fruitlessly by the delivery department. Forty per cent handled without profit, as against 80 per cent remaining sold, means that half as much merchandise is handled at a total loss as is sold permanently at a profit. It throws a full third of the delivery expense back on the two-thirds which is permanently sold. It adds to the ever-growing cost of doing business and the added expense that must be piled up on the profits on the goods sold to customers

Bad Salesmanship Cause of Returns

Merchants everywhere realize that this condition must be changed, and as soon as possible; the problem is what to do, and how to do it. Unquestionably a large part of this burden

has been brought upon the merchants by their own indulgence of their customers. For years salespeople have been taught, or at least permitted, to tell the customers to send several articles home, when only one is to be bought. I have repeatedly argued that this is definitely bad salesmanship. It is not only a waste of the store's resources, a cause of enormous damage to goods, a tax on the inspectors and the delivery department, but it leaves all the selling to be done by the customer and the customer's friends.

In order to secure a permanent sale of an article, the customer should always be told exactly why that article is the one to be desired. If it is wearing apparel, it should be becoming, it should fit, and it should suit the purposes for which it is being purchased. The salesperson should be more capable of determining this matter than the customer, in most cases, and should be able to give such reasons for the decision as will keep the customer sold. When this is not done, all of the merchandise is likely to be sent back, because a sister, or a mother, or a neighbor, or several of them will find some reason why no one of the articles is suitable, and the customer will go elsewhere to buy something that is better sold.

The first thing to be done is to teach salespeople to sell the article outright and not leave the decision to be made by the customer upon arrival at home, unless the customer very earnestly desires to have the matter done in that way. Next the merchant should try to get co-operative action among the stores in his city in reference to discouraging the returning of goods. This has been done in a number of cities. In the city of Cleveland recently I saw an advertisement signed by perhaps a dozen stores, an appeal to the public against uselessly returning merchandise, or buying merchandise which they expected to return. I believe that this is the best method of procedure, because a single store's appeal looks selfish and puts that store in the light of not wanting to extend the fullest pos-

sible courtesy to its customers. Merchants are all eager to do something in this respect, and in every city they will doubtless welcome any co-operative endeavor to lessen this evil.

Objections on Sanitary Grounds

The appeal, when it is made, should put the case largely on sanitary grounds, for the public's own protection. Today most stores refuse to take back hair brushes and combs, mattresses, and other bedding, and distinctly sanitary articles; but certainly it is just as bad to put back in stock a hat that a woman has worn, as it is to try to sell a brush and comb which have been used. When you think of it, it is quite as distasteful for a woman to feel that the blouse that she is purchasing as brand new may have been sent several times to the homes of different women before she finally purchased it. It is not pleasant for any one to feel that garments have been intimately tried on in a number of different homes, where conditions may not be as desirable as one would like. In fact I believe that in a very few years there will be board of health regulations that will absolutely forbid such careless passing around of wearing apparel, sold to customers as new merchandise.

"Scotching" the Return Privilege

The easiest method of procedure would be to have local boards of health pass ordinances against this practice, but whether it would be entirely to the advantage of stores to advocate such legislation at this time is questionable. But if a city board of trade, or chamber of commerce takes up this question, if each store contributes a certain sum for advertising, and this advertising is signed either by the board of trade or by the leading business houses of the town or city, a public sentiment can soon be created which will be definitely against carelessly buying goods to return them to the stores. It will make the public feel that they are asking a store to do some-

thing which is absolutely against public sentiment. If women can be made to feel every time they have goods sent home to be tried on, that they are making that merchandise objectionable to other purchasers, it will be easier to have them decide on just what they want to buy while they are in the store.

The Public Appeal

Following is a suggestion for an announcement, which you can present to your board of trade, or which you can present to a meeting of the merchants of your city, whom you might call together for the purpose of considering the "Returned Goods Evil" and working toward the solution of this problem. An announcement of this sort, published periodically in your local newspapers and signed by the board of trade, or by the combination of merchants, will help tremendously in reducing the amount of goods which you will sell and have returned.

After the publication of the announcement in the newspapers it will be well to have the same announcement printed on cards and posted up in various places throughout your store—complete with all the signatures, of course, even if your competitors' names do appear. In a few months' time an effort of this sort, I believe, will create such a public sentiment that people will not only not desire to purchase goods and return them, but will resent the tolerance of such a practice on the part of a store which permits women to trifle with its stock, and then offers it for sale. Here is copy for the announcement:

DO YOU SEND GOODS BACK TO THE STORES?

Most women and many men are very thoughtless about buying goods carelessly and then sending them back to the store when they decide that they do not

want them. Have you ever realized what a tremendous expense this is to the stores, and what an injustice it is to the people who finally buy the goods?

Many thousands of dollars' worth of merchandise are sent out by stores every year, only to have the customers ask them to send their delivery wagons to take the goods back, returning the money, or crediting their accounts. This is an injustice to the store; it piles up the cost of doing business, and it makes it necessary for a store to have larger profits on its goods than would be necessary if they did not have these expenses to take care of. It is as much to your interest to reduce this growing evil against storekeepers, as it is to the interest of the merchants themselves.

Is it pleasant to think that the Blouse, the Suit, the Dress, or the Hat that you buy in a store as spic-span-new may have been sent out to the homes of a number of people and returned to the store, after having been tried on in various people's homes, and then finally sold to you as new? Wouldn't you like to feel that the Hat that you buy has never been worn by any one for even a short time? You wouldn't like to buy a Brush and Comb that some one else has been using, because you wouldn't feel that it was new.

Is it any more pleasant to think that the Blouse, or the Suit, or the Coat that you are buying has been sent to somebody's home and worn around the house and perhaps worn to a theater, and then returned to a store? And yet perhaps you have yourself asked such favors as this continuously of your store, and would rather resent it if the store refused to accommodate you in this way.

Will you not try to make your decision about the merchandise you want while you are at the store, so that you will not have to ask a favor that you would not like to grant yourself; so that you will not send back goods from your house, to have somebody else buy them for new, when you would not like to do the same thing yourself? Your co-operation will be greatly appreciated by the merchants of our city, and it will help improve shopping conditions, and eventually definitely reduce the cost of the merchandise you buy.

XIII

TEACHING BUYERS TO MAKE A PROFIT

The Buyer Who Merely "Buys" Goods Not a Success

The term "buyer" indicating the man or woman who purchases the merchandise for a department in a store, is a most unfortunate name—for names do have an influence. When a store engages a man as buyer and gives him that title, he must unquestionably be impressed with the fact that he is engaged to do *buying*. It is an unfortunate truth that nine-tenths of the buyers in the department store business lend the largest part of their energy to the easiest part of their work—that of buying goods. As I was a buyer for various departments in a department store for many years, I know what I am talking about.

Anybody can buy goods, and the cleverest buyer on earth can scarcely make more than 5 or 10 per cent more than the worst buyer on any merchandise purchased. But the best department manager can sell goods at 20 to 25 per cent more profit than the worst department manager. Today the thoroughly successful buyers are the men and women who so manage their departments that they get their merchandise sold at the highest possible gross profits. The thoroughly efficient buyer performs three primary functions—he buys goods; he sells goods; he makes a sufficient net profit. The buyer who cannot make a profit is being entertained very generally in stores throughout the country and many such buyers think they are big men. And they are. Because any man who has sufficient personality to influence a merchant to retain him in a good position at a large salary when he doesn't make an ample net profit, must have some other kind of ability in very large supply.

The chief reason that buyers do not make profits is because merchants do not realize the fact, or are incapable of using the proper discipline. The store that does not thoroughly analyze its merchandise costs, its selling costs, its expenses, and its net profits, is in an extremely dangerous position, or running in wonderful luck. Yet there are hundreds of such stores, which, like the blind hog, are able to nose around and make a satisfactory living.

Estimated Profits May Be Deceptive

Buyers as a class are very poor at figures. If they buy goods for \$1, they figure that they will sell for \$1.50 and they count the profit made the moment the goods are purchased. Because they mark a profit of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent on the selling price and because the cost of doing business is 25 per cent they think they have done their full duty and made a great big stack of money for the firm. There are very few buyers that will figure that 50 per cent of their goods will sell at the marked profit, that another 25 per cent will be sold at 20 per cent profit, that 15 per cent will be sold at 10 per cent profit, and 10 per cent of the goods may be sold at 10 per cent loss. And not one buyer in twenty-five can tell what percentage of profit he has made when he learns these facts. When the auditing department sends him word that his profit in this case has been $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent and that he has lost $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to the house on all the merchandise he has handled, he will begin to abuse the auditing department and tell them that they do not know anything about making money.

Realized Profits May Be Astonishing

Many men who are very efficient in the selection of goods and in buying goods at the lowest possible prices, are most incompetent either to finance their stock or to mark their profit. But, not realizing that this is a totally different function,

buyers continuously resent the assistance that is given them by the firm, through the merchandise manager and the auditing and statistical departments. That is why it is most important that this vital matter of profits should not be left to the buyers to manage. It must be under the direct control of the merchant himself, or a very capable merchandise manager.

Keep a Close Watch on Your Figures

The question of mark-downs, or reductions, is quite as important as the mark-ups or profits. Every store should so analyze the reductions made on its various kinds of merchandise, that it will know definitely what percentage of the stock is sold at its full mark-up profit, and what average profit is made on the balance of the stock. No store is safe until it has learned what its average profit will be, when based on a certain percentage of mark-up. If the average profit in a department is to be $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent, the goods when they first arrive must be marked at a profit of 40 per cent at least, and then the mark-downs must be watched very carefully.

Don't Fritter Away Profits

The great danger to profit is in permitting buyers to reduce the price of goods indiscriminately whenever they take the notion. The buyer is an unsafe man to judge of the value of merchandise, because he is continually seeing new goods that seem to him more desirable than the goods previously purchased and now in stock. He is constantly tempted to cut the price on what he has, in order to buy the newer goods, and two weeks after he has bought the new goods he sees other goods that he likes better and repeats the previous action, again reducing his possibility of profits. For this reason it is not safe to permit any reductions in prices to be made in the store without having a slip made out, indicating the quantity of the goods in stock, the cost, the selling price, the proposed

reduced price, and the loss of profit indicated by that particular mark-down. Printed forms of this sort will keep the buyer impressed with the fact that he is all the time losing profits on his goods when he makes reductions.

But if the buyer is careless about making out these forms when he makes the reductions, then more serious action must be taken by the firm, because it is quite useless to go through the tremendous work of keeping store without making adequate profit. The merchant should continuously impress upon his buyers the fact that their services cannot possibly be valued for what they buy and sell, if the inventory figures do not show positive and reliable net profits in proportion to the capital invested.

Things To Be Done

For this reason it is important that the merchant should undertake seriously to do these things:

1. Impress all buyers with the fact that they are department managers, that they must be complete merchants for their departments as though they were individual storekeepers. They must buy, but far more important, they must sell the goods bought; and then, most important of all, they must *make profits*. They must, within their own department, take care of all the expenses justly charged to that department. They must have their capital free and not tied up, so that new goods can be bought and paid for. They must protect their profits from useless reductions and they must always maintain a definite percentage of net profit above the cost of doing business.

2. The merchant must install an efficient system of controlling purchases, so that no particular department is using the capital that belongs to another department. He should also, out of each department's capital, set aside 20 to 25 per cent of its money for purchasing special goods at special prices,

so that special offerings can be made for advertising purposes on which the store will make its full percentage of profit, thus preventing the necessity of marking down regular merchandise to make advertised bargains.

3. The merchant must provide a system of forms on which the buyer will make a record of all purchases made, showing the figures at cost, the figures at retail, and the percentage of profit. This form should also bear the buyer's estimate in figures, of what percentage of the goods can be sold out at the mark-up profit. This form should bear a serial number indicating the goods purchased and this number should be carried on the tag of the merchandise. These forms should be filed as received and kept in good order in a compartment for that department, so that they may be referred to and compared, when the buyers later on in the season send in their reports of reductions made on merchandise. All forms containing the buyer's request for reductions on merchandise should also bear the serial number indicating the purchase lot of merchandise, so that the quantity reduced in price may be checked back against the purchase card. This system will show all the time how nearly the goods are maintaining their percentage of profit, according to the estimate the buyer made when he purchased them. This matter is very simple when the system is once organized. It is a system that will be welcomed by every right-thinking buyer. He will be glad to have this information, because it will make a better merchant of him and his work will begin to count for more than it has in the past.

Sound Policies

The merchant must always be sure of his own facts and figures; he must always be fair to the buyer. But both merchant and buyer must equally respect the actual figures of the business. The control must always remain in the office of the firm. To recapitulate these are the things to do:

1. Never permit a buyer to make purchases beyond the figure allowed him by the merchandise office.
2. Never permit a buyer to spend his appropriation for new goods he has seen, while neglecting to provide for the staple merchandise that the department requires.
3. When goods are purchased to be sold at a definite selling price, never permit a buyer to pay more for the merchandise than the maximum profit will permit.
4. Always insist on sufficient increase in percentage above the average profit required, so that there will be ample allowance for the necessary reductions to be made later in closing out the merchandise.
5. Always require a buyer to make a definite and exact report of every purchase made, this report to be confirmed in your own accounting room by correspondence with the firm from whom the goods are purchased.
6. Always demand a definite and accurate report on merchandise on which a reduction is made in price, having the quantity, the cost, the selling price, the reduced price, and the loss of profit shown on this form before the reduction is authorized and before the marked price on the goods is changed. Then see that all buyers live up to these instructions and take the most drastic action whenever this rule is broken.
7. From the reports of purchases made, create a system for carefully comparing buyers' estimates of profits with reports of reductions made on the same lots of merchandise, identified by serial numbers.
8. Never fail to call the buyers to account and show them the figures on every line of merchandise that

fails to show the average profit of the buyers' forecast. Of course there will be times when the buyers are justified in not making this average profit. But by far the largest number of failures to make proper profits will be found to come from not marking a sufficiently high profit in the first place to take care of the necessary reductions, thus protecting the average profit on the entire sale of the merchandise.

No Business Can Live Without Profits

If you can educate your buyers to realize that making an average profit of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on their merchandise is actually losing money for the firm, then you will begin to accomplish the real purpose of storekeeping. It is very much better to have a buyer who is less discriminating regarding quality, but who fully recognizes the necessity for profits, if it is impossible to secure buyers who possess both of these necessary faculties. It is very bad for a store not to have the very best merchandise at every price. But a store that does not make the necessary profits, cannot live at all. The store that is making exorbitant profits in a few departments in order to carry other buyers who are merely parasites on the business, is doomed to inevitable failure when the right competition appears. For this reason every department should be compelled to make its own sufficient net profit and no buyer should be tolerated in any business who is not capable of making a justifiable net profit in his own department.

XIV

SELLING MORE GOODS TO MEN

The Value of Men's Business

Very few general stores sell more than a small fraction of the goods they should to men. Men whose families buy large supplies of goods every month in your store are probably buying practically all of their own supplies elsewhere—perhaps getting goods no better and paying more for them than they would cost with you.

Perhaps you have never tried to get this business. More than likely you have never stopped to think about the value of men's trade, or perhaps you have never thought the men's business big enough in volume to be worth "breaking your neck" to get it. Suppose you stop and think of the volume of business done in your city by the men's clothing stores, the men's shoe stores, the men's furnishings stores. Think of the goods that men buy in the jewelry stores and hardware stores—*the same sort of things that women would buy in your store!*

Men's Business Is a Big Business

The men's business in department stores is small, as a rule, because department store merchants *don't know how to advertise or sell goods to men*. It is a GREAT BIG BUSINESS when Marshall Field or John Wanamaker goes after it! It is a VASTLY BETTER PAYING BUSINESS than selling to women, for these and other reasons:

1. A man buys in far less time than a woman, taking less time of salesman, less rent, and general overhead.

2. Very few goods bought by men are RETURNED. In fact there is practically no "returned goods evil" where goods are sold to men.
3. Men's goods are less "perishable" than women's wear in the matter of losing their value by reason of sudden style changes. The percentage of "mark-downs" is proportionately very small.
4. Men's goods allow the same "mark-up" as women's goods.

I do not believe that one department store merchant out of a hundred has ever paid any attention to these indisputable FACTS. Otherwise there would be more men's business done by department stores. I think most merchants consider the men's trade a poor business of small volume, and don't try to get it. The FACT is that it is the best business in the store, if you can get it right and take care of it.

How To Get the Men's Business

Now, if you decide to go after more men's business, how shall you go about it? The trouble has always been that department store merchants don't know how to handle men's goods, or men. The first thing to do is to get this part of the business in charge of MEN WHO KNOW the MEN'S WEAR BUSINESS.

First, you must have the goods that men want.

Second, you must have experienced men to sell them.

Third, you must have A SEPARATE MEN'S SECTION in the FRONT of the store in which to sell them. Men won't go into a store among crowds of women to do their shopping.

Fourth, you must have A SPECIAL WINDOW to display men's goods constantly. Men must always find men's goods in that window. They must be given something to look for every day.

Fifth, you must do SPECIAL ADVERTISING TO MEN—preferably in a totally different place from the advertising to women. In any case it must be blocked off from the items for women, with everything separately classified.

Sixth, you must advertise your men's goods to the WOMEN who buy in your store. Fully half of the business influenced by your advertising should be secured by the suggestions and *recommendation of your men's goods* by women to their husbands.

So, in going after men's business there are these two chief efforts to be made:

1. To advertise intelligently and intensively to MEN.
2. To appeal to women so that THEY will URGE MEN to come and buy your goods.

Goods Rather Than "Bargains"

In advertising to men, it is quite as important to advertise your SERVICE as your goods, and it is MORE IMPORTANT to exploit the excellence of the goods than a bargain price. Very few men doubt the fact that prices are likely to be lower in the department store, but most of them are very doubtful about the quality or styles being as good as in the clothing store.

It is of vital importance to emphasize the fact continuously that the men's section is "JUST INSIDE THE DOOR TO THE RIGHT." You must never let a man forget for a moment that he doesn't have to hunt through a crowd to find the men's department. You must keep before him the fact that you know he wants to be waited upon quickly and intelligently. He positively won't go to a store where he has to give away his rights as a courtesy to some woman who wants attention. He prefers to let her have THE WHOLE STORE, while he has his own. These things are all easily arranged, when you have John Wanamaker's will to create a REAL STORE FOR MEN.

Two Lines of Approach

There are two ways to go after the men directly:

1. By newspaper advertising—the best and quickest way, if it is done with good judgment.
2. By means of letters or printed matter, sent by mail.

In advertising to men it must be remembered that men will not read anything that lacks good sense or looks unreasonable. Men won't read "conventional chatter." They must be talked to straight from the shoulder, in an earnest, honest manner. The advertiser must cut out all "highfalutin" language and stick to facts. This does not mean that he shall refrain from telling the whole story about the goods—their style, quality, character, and desirability. But all these things must be stated in strong, manly words, with convincing good sense.

The regular advertising in the newspapers should talk quality and character most of the time, and special values between times. It is a fatal error to talk bargains all the time. That policy absolutely destroys the confidence of the men who would rather go to the clothing stores than take the questionable chance on saving a few dollars on a suit of clothes that was doubtful in either quality or style.

Value of Letters

The use of a good mailing list can be made most valuable. This list should be carefully compiled and then kept up to date. Special letters should be mailed to the list several times each season, first, to notify the man of the arrival of the new suits and overcoats, and to tell the enthusiastic story of their merits, so that the man will be impelled to come in and see them, at least. If possible, samples of the fabrics should be secured from the manufacturers, so that at least one sample might be enclosed in each letter to add interest. When new shipments arrive in mid-season another letter might be sent to the list. Then, as soon as any price-reductions are made, a letter should

be sent out slightly in advance of any newspaper announcement, so the men written to would see that they were receiving special consideration, and they would learn to investigate these announcements. These letters could be written about shirts, underwear, socks, or shoes, as well as clothing. Even if the men did not directly respond to the special goods written about, they would be compelled to think about your store in a very definite way, and thus would be impelled to go and see what you had when they wanted goods, whether they saw an advertisement at the time or not.

A Clean Profitable Business

The most important thing is to REALIZE fully the VALUE of the MEN'S BUSINESS, and the possibility of getting it, if you try to get it. Think what a clean and profitable business it is! Think about the satisfaction of knowing that goods are sold, when the man buys them—not coming back to be changed or credited! And the men's goods are not constantly going out of style. Any department store can quickly add a nice percentage to its regular volume by doing the men's business RIGHT—in the John Wanamaker and Marshall Field way.

XV

OFFICE RECORDS THAT HELP TO CLEAN UP STOCKS

Tabulate Your Facts

Not one merchant in a thousand realizes the sales possibilities which he is constantly losing because he does not tabulate the valuable information that is going through the hands of his organization every day. The problem of selling certain kinds of goods economically is constantly arising, but one season finds the usual merchant just as helpless in the face of conditions as he was the year before. He has FAILED TO TABULATE THE NEEDED FACTS!

Odd Lots Are Wasteful

Every stock-taking time shows up vast lots of goods that are in what we usually call "odd sizes," "off colors," or shades which are not widely popular. Again there are "extreme styles" for which it is hard to find customers. At other times, it is just as hard to find people to buy the severely plain things. All of these odd lots are in small quantities, and if we advertise them in a big enough way to really get attention, we either waste most of the money, or we bring in too many people and have to disappoint most of them.

Gloves, for Instance

Just see how simple it is to change this whole condition of things. Take the glove department, for instance. The stock sheets show that there are odd lots of sizes 5, 5½, 7, 7½, and 8 in women's gloves. If we advertise them in the newspapers, most women who read the announcement see that their sizes

are missing and most of the advertising is wasted, while you are widely exploiting the fact that your lines of goods are not complete, or that most women cannot find the wanted bargains in your store.

When a woman reads that \$2 gloves are being offered for \$1, she doesn't congratulate herself that she wears a popular size. She just imagines that the merchant is "a contrary old thing" who might put her size in the bargain lot if he wanted to be a little accommodating. All her thought and sympathy are for herself. But suppose that you had a rule in your glove department that required every salesperson, on all but the busiest days—and always, when her memory would permit her—to put down the name and address of every customer, with her size, her preference as to color, stitching, and fastening, and the price paid for her gloves. This information will not only be kept on an alphabetical file for immediate reference, to see if the data is there each time before making a new record; but it will also be CROSS INDEXED and the name and address of the customer put on the list sheet of her particular size. It will be found that the list in size 5 is very short; the list in $5\frac{1}{2}$ will be a little longer; $5\frac{3}{4}$ still longer, and sizes 6, $6\frac{1}{2}$, and $6\frac{3}{4}$ the longest of all.

A Letter Sells Them

Just think what you could so easily do, if you had all these facts tabulated right now! You have stock sheets showing odd lots of Nos. 5 and $5\frac{1}{2}$ gloves. How simple it would be to address envelopes to all the names on the size 5 and $5\frac{1}{2}$ sheets in our index, and enclose the following letter:

DEAR MADAM:—

We have just finished taking stock and have made a little discovery that may be interesting to you. Not many women are blessed with sufficiently dainty hands to be able to wear Nos. 5 and $5\frac{1}{2}$ gloves, so we have a

surplus in these sizes that we want to get rid of, and so we are willing to sell them at JUST HALF THE REGULAR PRICE. Our records show us that your size is 5½, and that you have paid the regular price, \$2, for these same gloves, earlier in the season. Wouldn't you like to have a fresh, new pair, or two, when they can be had—WHILE THESE FEW PAIRS LAST—for \$1 a pair? If you can't come to the store at once, just telephone or write to us and we will send or reserve what you want, if your order comes quickly.

A Hand-Picked Bargain

This gives the customer a delightful hand-picked bargain—in just the thing that exactly suits her; and *it costs you mighty little* to tell the story direct to the most likely prospects in your city for the sale. Besides that, hundreds of women will be quite flattered to realize that you think enough about them to keep such complete records of their sizes and likes. A lot of them will prefer to deal at a store that takes them so earnestly, and that takes such pains to inform them directly when such welcome bargains are to be had.

The woman is just as glad—as a rule—to know about and buy such a bargain, as the store is to sell it. It is a great thing to be able to render a big service to the customer at the same time that you are cleaning up your stock.

Exactly the same SYSTEM may be applied to records of customers' shoes, corsets, stockings, underwear, shirts, waists, suits, coats, clothing, infants' wear—to every line of merchandise where size, or even color preference, makes it possible to appeal directly to the people known to require or prefer that particular sort of goods.

Ammunition or Bait

Of course, there are two conditions that determine the method a merchant will pursue in reference to closing out goods. It depends upon what he desires to accomplish. If he

really wants to get rid of certain odd lots of goods at the least possible advertising cost, he will follow the card index record plan suggested above. But if he is more interested in using his bargains for AMMUNITION, or for BAIT, then he will operate in the old way—and advertise his same old

“ODD LOTS AT HALF-PRICE!”

In this case, though, to avoid the certain reaction that comes from people's being disappointed because they don't find their sizes, the careful merchant will FILL IN THE MISSING sizes, as well as he can, by special purchases of similar goods, even if he doesn't make any profit on the goods that must be added.

Whether you have office records or not, the best kind of inexpensive advertising for odd lots of any kind of goods, may be done directly by mail, if you have lists of your customers. Very often a little thought will suggest several names of people who would be likely to be interested in a certain expensive garment or piece of goods that you would like to sell. These personal letters, written to only five or six people, would usually sell the thing you want to get rid of, if a cleverly worded letter were written. This suggestion would apply to an elegant pair of blankets—to some unusually fine piece of table linen—to some piece of dress goods or silk.

Finding the Right Customer

Whenever any special goods begin to worry you, and you wonder why they do not sell, make up your mind that it is *because they have not been properly shown to the right person.*

This is one of the biggest secrets in retailing!

You know certain storekeepers who never add any special goods on the market to their stock without having some cer-

tain customer in mind who might purchase that article. The same sort of analysis carried further will locate the purchaser with certainty, if that kind of thought and DIRECT SELLING EFFECT is applied to bringing the goods to the attention of the people who would like them.

PART II

SPECIAL MERCHANDISING PROBLEMS

MANY of the problems of the ambitious merchant are never thought of till they force themselves on his attention in the midst of a busy day, and then whatever thought comes to him is crowded out before it is studied and acted upon.

The chapters that follow are for reading in a quiet hour at home or when preparing subjects for discussion in an executive conference. How shall you get people to really know what you have for sale? How attract new customers? Develop your store activities? Improve your merchandising? Plan for the coming season?

Getting in a rut is one of the chief dangers to successful storekeeping—merchandising along lines that have grown out of date without the fact being realized. New customers must be secured constantly; new methods applied to both buying and selling; or your public will get away from you.

These chapters should suggest lines of study—remind you of things which should be done—stimulate your own thought to put new life and energy into your whole organization.

XVI

DO THE CUSTOMERS IN YOUR STORE KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE FOR SALE?

The Easy Road to Larger Selling

This is a very serious question—though it may look strange to you here. The fact is that only a very small percentage of the customers who go into any store have any tangible knowledge about the special offerings of the day or the new goods that the store is showing at that time. Thousands of additional people would buy the special offerings IF THEY KNEW ABOUT THEM, and hundreds of people would be mightily interested in the new and fine things in the store, *if it were merely suggested that they look at them.*

I believe there is no exaggeration in the statement that any good store could increase its business FULLY TWENTY PER CENT, if it could solve the problem of *selling as much as possible* to the people who come into the store—that implies *getting maximum attention for all the store's merchandise* while the people are in the building. But with widely scattered stocks and such multitudes of goods pressing for show space, it is a matter requiring constant study to get people to know about a small fraction of the stocks.

It is very obvious, however, that the *best prospects* for increased business are the *customers actually in your store*. They don't have to be brought to you by costly advertising. They are ALREADY THERE. They need only to be shown or told.

What are you actually doing to let people who are in your store know about your special offerings and your other interesting merchandise?

Systematic Effort to Increase Sales

Some stores are doing a little. *But no store that I ever heard about* is making any efficient, continuous, and SYSTEMATIC effort to *sell people more goods than they come for*. Of course, I do not include in this statement such efforts as salespeople naturally make, right at the counter, to introduce other goods, nor the casual and haphazard suggestions that are made in many stores about goods in other departments. These are only SPASMODIC instances, good in their way, but absolutely unorganized.

I have told you elsewhere about the head salesman in the Louvre department store in Paris, and how he secured sales to the amount of \$300 from a man who went into the store with no idea beyond buying several pairs of automobile goggles. He made the sales by his tactful suggestions, given personally to the customer, about other interesting merchandise in other sections of the store. Now that is the thing that must be done to secure your increased business. How shall YOU arrive at the MECHANICS of doing it?

The Daily Bulletin

Some stores are now in the habit of posting up the proof of the day's advertisement at some point in the store. Strangely enough, they usually select the most crowded place—right at the elevators—to post the advertisement, where people are too much jostled to read it. And a whole advertisement in small newspaper print is never readable in that manner.

The most efficient plan that I can suggest is a DAILY BULLETIN, which can be constructed in various ways. The news may be inserted by means of lettered slips of cardboard, or by spelling the announcements out in porcelain or celluloid letters slipped into the prepared grooves. It will be an advantage to have the board divided into two sections to provide for headings, as follows:

**SPECIAL OFFERINGS
FOR TODAY**

Special Purchase of
Women's Chiffon Blouses
at \$3.48
Third Floor

Roller Kitchen Towels
2½ yds. long
Today, 34c
Second Floor

Sale of Short Lengths of
UPHOLSTERY MATERIALS
AT HALF PRICE

Fourth Floor

Sale of Children's SHOES
Second Floor

WHILE IN THE STORE
Take a Few Minutes to See
These Interesting Things

Four New Models of
Women's

TAILORED SUITS

Just arrived from New York
Third Floor

An Exclusive Collection of
Women's

NOVELTY WALKING BOOTS
in new combinations
Main Floor

An Interesting Color Display
of the fashionable

CHARMEUSE SILKS

required for the Afternoon Gowns
shown in the current issue of Vogue

These bulletins should be 6 to 8 feet high and 8 to 10 feet long, and be placed where EVERYBODY CAN SEE THEM. Yet it should not be necessary to take shelving or counter space for them. If you have blank wall space simply use that. If not, as is likely to be the case, I would suggest that the structure to hold the bulletin board be built on the top of a shelving fixture in a prominent section of the store—but not on a fixture that is so high that the announcements cannot be easily read.

Of course, many more items than are suggested might be used—according to the space that your bulletin would provide. But the left side should announce the special offerings of the day, and the right side should give equal publicity to the new arrivals and to the telling about special displays of regular goods, such as the charmeuse silks in the above list.

The bulletin board is good only when it creates DAILY INTEREST. If it becomes a “dead thing,” it isn’t worth its space or the trouble of preparing it every day. On the other hand, if it isn’t newly prepared every day, it will soon become a “dead thing.” The NEWS quality is its *only reason for existence*. It must be made a real help to customers. They must be so educated that they will *feel as though they were missing something* unless they see what is on your bulletin every time they come into the store.

How To Use the Bulletin Board

There are many ways to stimulate interest in the bulletin aside from the news itself—or rather to *attract public attention* to the bulletin. A flashlight, arranged on an eccentric connection, is a splendid attention getter. If the board is arranged to be filled with slips of white cardboard, lettered in black, a startling effect could be secured by arranging a flashlight scheme that would alternate in throwing various colors on the board, intermittently. Of course, the bulletin could not be so easily read while the color was actually on

the board, but if the white light always remained on the board for the longest time, there would be little interruption for readers and there would be large attention getting value for the board. Another simple but attractive way to get attention for the board is to have a display of flowers, or artificial plants artistically arranged and constantly changed. If the board is on the floor, or near enough for the pictures to be seen, a service of news photographs, to be posted on the board will get interested attention continuously.

Using the Printed Bulletin

Another valuable means of soliciting more business from the "customers in your store," is the PRINTED BULLETIN—the little leaflet to be handed to every person coming into the store. This should be printed EVERY AFTERNOON, on the day before it is to be used. It is very inexpensive and very little bother to handle, once the system is in operation. In fact, it may simply put in leaflet form the same copy that is used on the large bulletin and suggested on the preceding pages. There is opportunity, however, to give fuller descriptions of the goods by using small type. A small sheet, 4½ by 6 inches, might be large enough. The special offerings should be printed on one side and the suggestions about interesting things to see among the regular merchandise on the other side. As the idea developed and you had more news to tell, you would doubtless enlarge the leaflet to four pages.

The Habit of Suggesting Things

All of the store's aislemen, managers, and salespeople should be educated into the HABIT of asking customers politely if they have seen certain advertised goods, before letting them get out of the store. In this work, ONE DEFINITE OFFERING should be selected for introduction each time—and the person should use intelligence in deciding what particular merchandise to suggest to each customer.

If this work of suggestion is done systematically, continuously, and tactfully, it will accomplish large results. But the attitude of the person making the suggestion must always be one of *conveying valuable information*—giving AN ECONOMY TIP, or the hint of interesting goods.

STUDY CONSTANTLY how to get the customers in your store to see more of your goods while they are in the building. It is wasteful negligence to let them go out without more suggestions of what you have for sale. Stop the loss.

XVII

WHAT UNPROFITABLE DEPARTMENTS CAN YOU KILL?

If It Does Not Pay, Drop It

We have seen that it is the policy of a progressive store to give the small departments, and the sick ones, a chance to grow healthy and strong. But the department that *keeps on losing money is a liability, not an asset*, and the wise merchant *knows when to kill it*. Habits are deadly when they are bad habits, and nowhere are bad habits more costly than in storekeeping. Hundreds of merchants do things year after year at which they lose money; but they are creatures of habit. They think they must wink at certain losses and forget them, because they have always kept store that way and there is no known way to cure the trouble.

I was talking to the vice-president of one of the most successful specialty shops in America a little while ago. We were discussing a certain store that was not prospering as it should; and he said:

"They carry too many lines of goods. If they would cut out a lot of their unprofitable departments, and not lose in them the money that they make in other departments, they would soon be on 'easy street.' " That is sound business sense. It is the modern tendency. The merchant who tries to have in stock everything on earth is a well meaning philanthropist, but his net profits are always unsatisfactory.

Of course, there are always a few departments that may be vitally necessary to the success of other departments. But when these are maintained they should be kept up in full and

complete stocks, so as not to arouse more complaint than they provide convenience. For instance, the notion department is vital, I should say. When rightly managed it should be profitable, although I have heard of stores that considered it merely a nuisance to be endured, as was probably the case. But how foolish to maintain a bulky china department, subject to breakage—a constant expense in up-keep and packing—if it is *not profitable*. It serves no necessity. It does not bring crowds to the store. It creates practically no prestige. Its space would give a lot of room for new and profitable merchandise. Of course, a china department that is really ALIVE and making money, is a very good thing, for there is less competition in china than in sheets or in women's garments. But it should be valued for its PROFITS ONLY.

Make Every Line Make Money

Run down the balance sheet of your year's business, and stop at the red figures that show losses, or the miserable little black figures that show where you barely escaped with a whole skin, and *get rid of wasteful stocks* that exist only to cut down your percentage of net profit.

Think what it will mean when every line of goods you sell will be showing good substantial net profits!

Don't invest your capital in goods that do not sell. Don't fatten up your salary rolls with salespeople who sell goods on which you make no profit. Don't give all this extra work to packers, carriers, and delivery employees—reducing the promptness and efficiency of your work on profitable merchandise—for the sake of an added volume of sales that provides no net profit for your business.

"Volume" Madness

During the past quarter of a century, department store merchants seem to have had only one goal in mind—VOLUME

OF SALES! Everything else, it seems, has been sacrificed to this one object with the insane hope that, if the volume were big enough, net profits would take care of themselves. What has been the result? A total absence of scientific direction; an almost total ignoring of merchandise control; the most erratic and haphazard efforts at efficiency. *The cost of doing business has gobbled up the merchants' profits.*

Very few merchants are blessed with excess of energy. Many of them haven't near enough to go round. Then why waste daily effort on capitalizing, merchandising, selecting, showing, selling, wrapping, delivering—perhaps charging and collecting—for vast quantities of merchandise which pay no profit, and absolutely compel you to neglect stocks that are *carrying the whole burden of your business.*

Kill the Parasites!

Why not keep the money that your profitable departments make? Root out the worthless PARASITES that are sapping the store's vitality. Close out the unprofitable stocks. Get rid of the employees whose efforts do not make money for you.

Useful Substitutes

When you have done these things you will probably have some vacant spaces in your store. Perhaps you could DOUBLE your ready-to-wear business if you gave it double space. On the other hand, perhaps the ready-to-wear business is so cut up among a lot of little shops in your city that it would not be worth your while to spend your energy in that direction. It might be that a fine up-to-date housewares department would make a big hit and do a profitable business. Maybe a soda fountain would bring thousands of people into your store, and make a lively section. Perhaps you could make enough space for a basement store, or an upstairs under-price store,

and start a popular-price trade that would make a sensation in your city. It all depends upon what you have previously done, and what your competitors have done in your city in the past.

If you belong to the Merchants' Association, you may easily learn what departments are generally profitable and what are doubtful. This will help you to decide what new departments to invest in. On the other hand, it may turn out to be better to try something that has not been done before. You might give a section to specializing on kitchen cabinets, and have special demonstrations by saleswomen who go from house to house and secure big and profitable results. It might be sewing machines, bicycles, pictures—a tea room. Your own present stocks and your community's conditions, size, and possibilities must settle the details.

But stores that are suffering from unprofitable stocks must expect to fritter away their profits unless they will clean house and GET RID OF THE PARASITES. It will be easy enough to discover healthier and more profitable lines when capital is released and floor space provided by the good riddance.

XVIII

THE WORK OF EARLY DECEMBER—TO GET MAXIMUM HOLIDAY SALES

When Purses Are Wide Open

As the first week of December ends, you are at the very crest of the wave of the big holiday business that you have been counting on for months—the biggest Christmas business that has been known for the stores that go after it! If I were employed right in your store today, I shouldn't be cudgeling my brain to devise some "sale" to pull off to stimulate selling—not on your life! But I should be bending every energy toward digging out the news about my holiday merchandise, so as to *let everybody in town know what I had* and to tell them why they should buy the goods I was describing. I should be trying to *pack enthusiasm into the decorator—to get 100 per cent selling quality* into his displays and the *broadest possible showing* of the holiday goods and the best possible suggestions of **HOW TO USE the GOODS and WHOM TO GIVE them to.**

The pocketbooks of your city are going to be wide open during three December weeks! But the amount of money that people are going to spend is going to depend largely upon *the advertising that you make them read and the goods that you make them see.*

What Sixteen Days Can Do

If I were employed in your store, the first thing that I should do would be to call a meeting of the entire organization and tell them the story of the possibilities and the opportunities, as well as *their responsibilities* for the increased sell-

ing that should be done within the next SIXTEEN BUSINESS DAYS! I should appeal to their LOYALTY to reap the harvest of sales at this time to help pay the cost of the lean days that must come in January and February and next summer. I would appeal to their AMBITION to make a sales record to which they might point when the question of salary increase comes up. I should talk about the HUMAN SERVICE that would be rendered every time a salesperson persuaded a customer to buy some gift that had not been intended when the customer entered the store.

I should urge the importance of showing customers unasked-for goods while telling the story of how they could be used, or to whom they might be given, and why they would always serve or delight the recipient. I should urge every salesperson to go back to his counter and STUDY THE GOODS HE HAD TO SELL, to discover new Christmas arguments, new advertising ideas, new selling ideas to use when showing them to customers. Then, after the meeting, I should spend a lot of time asking the clerks at the counters WHAT THEY HAD DISCOVERED, what they thought should be advertised, and why and how, and what should be said about the goods. I should get them to talk frankly.

What Salespeople Think and Hear

I tell you that we lose a tremendous amount of good ideas, because we don't know what the salespeople are thinking about.

I know that a big majority of merchants, managers, and buyers think that the opinions of salespeople are silly and useless. They rarely ask and almost never act upon the suggestions made by the people behind the counters. In a big store of three hundred salespeople, there are *three hundred brains thinking every day*. Perhaps they do think a lot of silly and impractical things; but *the things they are thinking*

are the things that your customers are apt to hear from them. They are also thinking about the things that your customers say regarding the goods and the store; and if you don't GET THEIR CRITICISMS AND SUGGESTIONS, you can have only a faint idea of what they say to customers and what customers say to them.

Don't forget that your salespeople are the only point of direct contact between your store and your customers.

The spark plug may be a very insignificant item in your Twin-Six, but when you have a poor contact and poor ignition, you *might as well be driving a "tin Lizzie"!* So I consider that one of the most important things to do right at the beginning of December—to brighten up your spark plugs—to STIMULATE and put new energy and ambition into YOUR SALESPEOPLE. For the success of the whole holiday business depends upon *their individual efforts* to increase their sales, and the success they have in stimulating larger buying on the part of the customers who come into your store. And their effort depends on their interest.

How To Bring More People In

When your merchandise, your organization, and your displays are all ready, you have the daily responsibility of bringing more people into your store.

What is your attraction for tomorrow? That is the question that you must ask yourself every day of the next sixteen. You may have a mechanical circus. You may have a LIVE Santa Claus. You may have a Chrysanthemum Show. You may have a brilliantly electric-lighted Christmas tree, with some gift-trinket for every youngster under five years of age who comes into the store. I don't know what your plans or your conditions may be. But whatever you have, of interest in the store, be sure to make it known to the public by enthusiastic advertising.

John Wanamaker's Pet Plan

One of John Wanamaker's own personal advertising pets, always, was the list of gifts for all kinds of people; and he was perfectly willing to use a double page in several costly newspapers, for the mere listing of gifts for men, gifts for women, gifts for girls, gifts for boys, gifts for babies, gifts for old people, gifts for "shut-ins," etc. I have often thought these lists were wasteful—that it might be better to keep on telling the daily story of the merchandise; but he never doubted the tremendous value of this sort of helpful service to people *who don't know what to give* to various kinds of people.

So John Wanamaker would advise you to *devote a whole page*, at least, to as big a list as you can think up, of things to be given to various classes of people. The women's magazines for December will probably contain well tabulated lists of Christmas gifts suitable for various people. The magazines have paid experts to do this very valuable work. Their lists represent a disinterested point of view—what will be best for the person who is to receive the gift, not what will be convenient for a merchant who has certain things which he wants to sell.

How Magazines May Help

I recommend that you get copies of the December women's magazines and build up a page announcement of this valuable Christmas information for your readers. You may want to change many of the items and you may want to omit many of the things that you do not have in stock, but it will make a wonderful working plan. The one important thing to add will be a list of prices, following each of the items—for the one thing that the customer will be anxious to know is "What will these things cost?"

This list of gifts should be published about ten days before

Christmas—when people are beginning to worry about what to give, and while it is not too late to get real results in actual sales. I am sure that you will find that the list will be a valued treasure in the hands of hundreds of worried people. It will help them mightily in discovering what they want to buy for various friends. The Christmas advertising problem is definitely the supplying of **HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS** rather than quoting foolish price-reductions.

XIX

WHERE WERE YOU WRONG LAST HOLIDAY SEASON ?

The Week Before Christmas

The week before Christmas brings the MOST VITAL MOMENT of the entire year for making valuable notes *for the next year's guidance* in buying holiday goods. What about your stock? Several weeks later, after slashing the prices, a lot of unprofitable goods—or perhaps goods that showed definite loss—will be gone and forgotten, whereas their costly presence in your stocks should be remembered, so that you will not make the mistake of buying them in such quantities again. On the other hand, people will be asking during this last holiday week for hundreds of things that are sold out, and you should make a note of every one of them to be ready with larger and more complete stocks the following year.

Don't Guess—Get Facts

Every store makes the error year after year of GUESSING AT the quantities wanted of certain things. The management will be most accurate about general orders, perhaps, placing the same orders for many goods as the year before—and then have no definite facts about whether they were able to fill all orders the previous year or not. If nobody was sitting on the job, to watch when the stocks ran short, the merchant can never know how many of his good customers just before Christmas were compelled to go to his competitors to secure goods that they had a perfect right to expect to find in his store. When DRIVEN to the OTHER STORE to secure the things wanted, most of these people would *find other goods to buy*.

They might also find that the other store was BETTER in several ways than the one to which they had been so loyal, where the merchant was too careless about his stocks to deserve loyalty. That is why it is so important to have A DATA BOOK made out during this important week to show just what your stock experience has been. It will be of the greatest possible value when the time comes in the fall to estimate the size of your orders for holiday goods.

What Is Being Asked For?

Salespeople AT EVERY COUNTER should be asked each day during this period: "What are you being asked for, that you haven't got in stock?" Every item should be noted in your data book every day. Next they should be asked: "What have you in stock that isn't selling?" You should make careful notes about these non-selling goods.

You can confirm what the salespeople say, by asking the same question of the buyer. But *ask the salespeople first!* If this work is done just before Christmas, you'll get definite information. If you put it off for a couple of weeks, a clever buyer may cut prices and get the profit-lossers sold at a loss, and you will never know just what goods stole the profits that you worked so hard to secure.

Now is the time to get the facts, under all circumstances. When you get the information, you may sell the goods as quickly as you can; for they can't get you into the same fix the next time—if you know!

Were Your People Trained?

What has been wrong with your selling force this season? Have you had too many people in one department and too few in another? Have you instructed people in the selling of certain lines of goods, then discovered that you needed them in some other department, and put them to selling goods that

they knew nothing about? Or did you FAIL TO INSTRUCT them at all? Has your big mistake been that you took on green salespeople and didn't have time, or didn't TAKE time, to teach them how to sell the goods they had to handle?

Were Your Stocks Right?

How about your stock arrangements? Do you find that some departments have more space than they really need, while other stocks are CRAMPED TO THE LIMIT, so that customers can't get up to the counters to be served? At holiday times it is far more important to make the size of your counters *fit the customers to be waited on* than it is to have them fit the goods that are to be shown. Make a note of these facts and shortcomings in your DATA BOOK, to help you in laying out your stock spaces next year.

How About Your Delivery?

How about your delivery department, and your wrapping facilities? Are you getting all your deliveries out on time now? Or is your wrapping department so congested that you can't get the work done and so your people have to work all night to get the goods out? What would you LIKE TO DO NOW to improve delivery department conditions if you had the time, or could get the space, or could get the people? Make a note of these things and *do them before you start*, next year.

Did You Starve Your Advertising?

How about your advertising? Have you really done a good job, and got the best possible result, or were you stingy and STARVED your business? Perhaps you foolishly spent some money in some direction, but might have got better results, if you had saved it to use in some other direction. Perhaps you waited until too late to do certain things. Put all these facts down in your data book NOW, and you won't be so helpless next season.

Make A Note of It

No man's mind is big enough to remember all these things. More than half of them are bound to be forgotten. The data book won't forget, and it is so EASY to avoid old mistakes when they are ALL TABULATED for us in the data book. And put down also what other stores have done, that you haven't done. What are the successful things that your competitors are doing? What is Marshall Field doing in Chicago, John Wanamaker in New York or Philadelphia? What is being done by the hundreds of other live stores? Whenever you hear of something clever being done, **MAKE A NOTE OF IT.** You may want to do exactly the same thing, or you may get an original inspiration from one of these ideas for doing something yourself. Running down the list of things in your data book next fall will give you the needed stimulus to **START SOMETHING**, at least. It will provide the basis of your plan.

Good ideas run in one ear and out the other, *if we don't write them down.* That's what your data book is for.

MAKE A NOTE OF IT!

XX

PUT YOUR CAPITAL INTO THE GOODS THAT SELL

Some Goods That Didn't Sell

At a big advertising convention in Philadelphia, Mr. William H. Ingersoll made an address on "Turnovers and Leftovers," in which he gave a very impressive illustration of how badly-bought merchandise can kill profits, and how merchandise bearing high profit marks sticks on the shelves and eats the store's head off. Mr. Ingersoll was making a tour of small-town stores, to see how they sold goods and what goods were selling best. He stopped in a store in northern New York state, and talked to the owner for three hours. In that time eleven customers came in to be served. Mr. Ingersoll noticed that practically everything sold was taken from the first two tiers of shelving in the front of the store. Practically nothing was sold from any other part of the room.

Upon inquiry about this matter, the merchant said there was no particular reason for this, except that he got to putting the goods that people wanted on those particular shelves, so that everything would be handy.

Mr. Ingersoll was sufficiently interested to make, with the aid of the merchant, a quick inventory of the goods on the popular shelves, and found the stock there amounted to about seven hundred dollars. The entire stock in the store amounted to about seven thousand dollars, showing that this particular merchant was doing practically all of his business on ONE TENTH of his CAPITAL STOCK!

This may sound like a clever story, at the expense of an old-fogy merchant; but while the proportions may have been extreme in his case, almost every merchant is operating on the

same principle in certain parts of his store. Of course, this condition may be to some extent unavoidable; some goods must necessarily sell faster than others and it may not always be practicable to buy certain slow-selling goods in as small quantities as the demand would indicate.

But it will be a MIGHTY WELL-MANAGED STORE that cannot find a multitude of lines of goods where improved merchandising would not increase turnovers and release tied-up capital for much needed use in more active stocks. The important thing is to REALIZE THE MENACE that exists; *watch out for the bad stock condition*; get rid of the slow-sellers, or reduce the surplus; and get all your capital invested in live, active merchandise.

Checking Sales

Some merchants will ask: "How can I know what goods are not selling fast enough?" There are two chief ways now used by all progressive merchants:

1. The tagging of all goods with a serial number, which indicates the year, half-year, or month, in which the goods were bought, this figure being placed over, or in connection with the cost figure. For instance, goods put in stock in September, 1917, might be marked "97-4782"—the "9" standing for September, the 9th month, and the "7" indicating 1917. The other figures carrying the cost cipher. Thus 117 would indicate Nov. 1917; while 17 would indicate Jan. 1917.
2. The perpetual inventory, now a feature of all best-informed stores, shows accurately, at all times, just how each stock stands, how long the goods have been inactive, and exactly what turnovers are being made.

Tools That Don't Work

There are hundreds of merchants who might say: "I have all my goods marked with serial numbers to identify their age, and I have my perpetual inventory, and still I can't get rid of slow-selling stocks." Well, my dear man, the having of a fine big chest of tools in the house, doesn't fix the table leg or the door that sticks. When a man has tools *he has to use them*, or he might as well not have them.

If there is one fault in storekeeping that causes more weakness and loss than all others put together, it is the fatal habit among merchants and managers of not doing the thing you KNOW YOU OUGHT to do! When it is the business of three or four men to do a certain thing—NOBODY DOES IT! The merchant depends upon the general manager, perhaps; then the general manager depends upon the buyer; and half the buyers know very little about the quantities of goods in stock, because they depend, in turn, upon the salespeople to keep them informed. This condition is as common as measles!

"Out Again, In Again"

It is so common today that mighty few merchants even THINK about it. They've grown *absolutely hardened to it*, and many have given up trying to cure it. Those that have made the biggest effort to cure it, sell out the old goods at a loss and then HURRY AND BUY MORE, in equally unnecessary quantities.

No Nourishment in Paper Profits

So the hated cost of doing business stays up so high that a lot of merchants say they can't afford to sell the live goods that they are making their living out of, because the profit on them is less than the "cost of doing business." But what is the value of paper profits on goods that you rarely sell?

Mr. Ingersoll found among the dead stock on his dealer's shelves, a large quantity of silver-plated casters (!)—if you

even remember them—from the past ages when they glorified the center of the table to hold the vinegar, oil, salt, and pepper. The casters carried the big profit of 100 per cent above cost, but *none was ever sold!* The whole thing was a loss. Up on the two front tiers of shelves were the trade-mark goods, bearing twenty and twenty-five per cent profit—*carrying the whole load!* Not only making money for the merchant, above his cost of doing business, but PAYING INTEREST AND RENT on the goods with the big profit that never were sold.

That “cost of doing business” *has got to come down.* The first thing to do is to stop carrying the big load that the store is weighted down with, by reason of slow-selling stocks. Get the burden off your capital. Get the burden off your rent. Get the burden off your tremendous selling effort. Get the burden off your advertising. Put your strength and energy into *selling things that people want.*

Live Goods Are the Real Money-Makers!

Put your capital in LIVE MERCHANDISE this coming season. Let your salespeople show goods they won't have to argue so much about and which they can sell in a fraction of the time. Advertise goods that will whet people's appetites. Stop rowing up stream. Sell the goods that SELL.

Live, quick-selling merchandise, with a rapid turnover—no matter how small the gross profit—is A BIGGER MONEY MAKER than slow-selling goods, no matter how big the mark-up may be. That's the direction in which wide-awake merchants are looking today; and that's the way we are going to arrive at a much lower “cost of doing business.”

XXI

SOME JANUARY MERCHANDISING SUGGESTIONS

Getting Out of the Rut

Most department stores start off the New Year with their January White Sales, some in a conventional and indifferent manner, others with a snap and go which result in good business. Most merchants are careful to have good offerings of regular 95c nightgowns and petticoats for 89c, or even 82c, but unfortunately it is rare to find good assortments of the newer garments that women want far more, when they are attractively shown and told about interestingly. For instance, fastidious women are always interested in dainty silk camisoles and will buy a new one as readily as they will buy a blouse, if the style attracts them. Most women want nightgowns, of course, but all women are attracted by a window display of women's pajamas. Some women buy them only because they are bizarre, but many women are now wearing pajamas because they are so vastly more protective and comfortable than the loose nightgowns.

Naturally, your White Sale should start off with the "bargains" and the conventional garments; but you can give a new jump to the whole White Sale movement, on the Monday nearest the 15th by having an interesting advertisement on Sunday, and an attractive window display next morning, of NEW AND UNUSUAL MODELS in women's intimate garments, such as

Lace-trimmed and embroidered pajamas

New effects in silk camisoles

Artistic Milanese silk tights to be slipped on when going automobiling on cold days, for skating, etc.

New styles in dressing sacques

New styles in envelope combinations, etc.

Of course, you will not buy larger stocks than your community will be likely to purchase; but *have enough to make an impression on the women of your town or city*. And always remember that it is very unwise to decide that women of your community won't buy certain things *before you have shown them to them*. Women from small towns come to New York and go wild over the dainty things shown in New York shops, largely because short-sighted merchants in home towns take it upon themselves to decide what women will buy and what they won't.

Things They Read About

The way to INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS is to find new goods to sell; and the wide-awake merchant soon finds that the well-to-do women of any community will be quick to buy the dainty garments that they have seen illustrated in *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *The Pictorial Review*, *The Delineator*, *The Ladies' Home Journal*, and other magazines, *if the merchant has the taste and gumption to show them*. As I said before, you may not need to carry more than a *very few garments* to create the proper impression and to get these valuable orders; but if you don't have enough in your store to supply your customers' wants you are DRIVING YOUR TRADE to bigger cities and to mail order houses.

One Price at a Time

In both window displays and advertising I want to remind you of the tremendously alluring power of showing goods of the *same price at one time!*

"Any Garment in this Window for 65c!"

This sign makes a POWERFUL APPEAL. It makes women study every garment shown. It makes them look *eagerly*, whereas a general assortment of goods gets only a casual glance. I have seen this fact illustrated scores of times in front

Today We Are Specially Showing the Following

WHITE SALE GARMENTS

At Only 65c Each

Formerly Priced at 85c, 90c, 95c, and \$1.00 each

Here are descriptions of some of these specially offered garments:

95c Nightgowns

Of soft nainsook, with attractively embroidered V-neck and cuffs.

White Sale Price..65c

90c Petticoats

Of soft muslin, well-shaped, and attractively finished with embroidered flounce.

White Sale Price..65c

\$1 Combinations

Of soft nainsooks, envelope style, daintily trimmed with lace.

White Sale Price..65c

Also a miscellaneous collection of Chemises, Corset Covers, Drawers, Nightgowns, and White Petticoats, previously selling for 85c to \$1—all now at 65c each

of the crowded windows, and I have watched that kind of advertising PULL GREAT THRONGS to the counters. Of course, such advertising pulls best when it is illustrated—when you can show in your picture a nightgown, a petticoat, a combination, a camisole, etc., and make the above statement under the whole group. This is particularly interesting when you are able to say also: "Regular prices were 85c to \$1," and have it absolutely obvious by the attractiveness of the garments offered.

When you are so situated that you cannot illustrate your advertising you may substitute a type story such as that on the opposite page.

Emphasize Value of Fine Things

You have another big opportunity in January and that is to emphasize the splendid values of your linens, especially if you have pretty liberal stocks of linens bought at favorable prices. No merchant will be willing to sacrifice linens needlessly, and it is not necessary; but there is always a splendid story to be told without any radical price-reductions. The clever thing to do is to show people the advantage of buying table linen at \$3 a yard on the old low-price basis, rather than to pay \$2 a yard and have to accept a vastly inferior quality that may be obtainable at the lower figure on the higher market. Almost any woman will be glad to pay a dollar more a yard, when she sees that she is getting linens that are twice as good. It gives her a most satisfying excuse for buying unusually fine linens, when otherwise they might seem like an extravagant purchase. The same argument will sell the fine towels that have seemed too high-priced in the past. Now it will be easy—without sacrifice—to sell these finer linens.

Those stores which do not hold a January Clearance Sale may use the plan for a "Sugar Plum" Sale, suggested in Chapter XXXIV.

While it may be poor policy to lose money on staple goods, *don't make the mistake of hoarding goods* that are of doubtful value. Certainly it would be the greatest possible mistake to fail to sell at once all goods, such as wearing apparel and the like, that have any features depending upon style changes.

Keep Your Goods in Motion

Keep your goods in motion. Don't let them stagnate because of speculative hopes that may evaporate and change into a loss. *Keep your store alive* and keep your customers interested in buying from you. It may be easy to make a few extra dollars and find that you have lost many of your customers to your competitor, who has turned out to be a better merchant, though a less shrewd speculator than you. Make January work for you in two ways, by making customers, and by making direct sales.

XXII

HOW SHALL YOU GET NEW CUSTOMERS?

Health Requires Growth

The healthy life of a store depends upon growth, and growth can come only through NEW CUSTOMERS. Old customers die and move away, and some are constantly being lured to other stores. This loss must be made up, to keep business even going. So it is easily seen that constant additions of new customers are vital to any store's success.

It should be a regular feature of every store's policy to be constantly working on a list of names of desirable customers for both cash business and credit accounts. They should be solicited to patronize the store by general invitations, as well as by specific announcements of certain offerings that will be calculated to arouse their interest and orders. Doubtless you are doing some such work already, so I will suggest a newspaper campaign such as should be promoted one or more times every year, with the object of adding to your lists of regular patrons. Let us call the occasion to be exploited

"NEW CUSTOMERS' WEEK"

to be held about the middle of March, or September, just at the season's start.

Show Your Store at Its Best

This is NOT to be primarily a "Sale"; for it is to come right in the heart of the new season, when everybody is ready to buy. It should be, first of all, a time to "show off" your store to the people who are not regular customers, and who will SEE IT AT ITS BEST by coming to your invitation event. Of

course, old customers will be just as welcome as new ones, and they will be in the large majority. In fact, "New Customers' Week" is to be promoted as much to do big business with your regular customers as with new ones—for old customers will be curious to see what you are doing for new ones, and will fill your store, so that they may be sure not to miss anything.

For this event you will plan the finest possible displays of NEW GOODS. You will display all over the store the specifically prepared signs:

**N E W C U S T O M E R S '
W E E K**

Making New Friends
and

Renewing
Old Acquaintanceships

Souvenirs for Your Guests

You will specially provide an attractive SOUVENIR to give to every visitor, new or old. This souvenir should have definite value. Remember that it is to be the ostensible reason for the new customer's coming to your store. It is to take the place of a price-reduction. Instead of taking 25 per cent off the price of the goods, you give the customer this souvenir. If your average sale is \$2, this souvenir could cost you 50c. If \$1, it could cost 25c. Of course, you could have various souvenirs of differing values. You might give a carnation or a potted primrose to EVERY visitor. You might give a 25c souvenir to every one who purchases goods to the amount of \$1 or more. You might give a 50c souvenir to every one who purchases goods to the amount of \$5 or more. You can determine upon the souvenir that suits your own taste and your

own ideas of expense; but it **MUST BE** something that it will be pleasant for people to receive.

The Invitation

If your records provide definite information as to those in your community who should **NOT** be considered as your patrons at present, you should print or engrave special invitations to be mailed to these people the week before the event. They might be worded as follows:

The Smith, Brown, Fox Company
request the honor of your presence
at their store during
NEW CUSTOMERS' WEEK
March 13th to 18th
when they will hold special
reception for people who are not
regular patrons of the store.
Souvenirs and light refreshments
will be provided throughout the week.

Of course, there can be no harm in mailing such an invitation to a regular customer, and many stores will doubtless include old as well as new names in their invitation lists.

Playing the Hostess

After these matters comes the manner of reception. A **RECEPTION COMMITTEE**, composed of your best people, should be assigned to the work of meeting people. They should wear "Reception" badges, and not only speak pleasantly to all people, but be ready to give special service to **NEW** visitors, either as guides or with advice about merchandise. And

they should particularly use their tact in calling the attention of visitors to the most attractive new merchandise—just as a hostess would take pride in showing her flowers, her pictures, or other new furnishings. If practicable, light refreshments should be served continuously. They may be as simple as crackers and coffee, or they might be cakes and cocoa. Sandwiches might be added. Tea served in the afternoon is always delightful.

The atmosphere of a reception should be as faithfully carried out as space and facilities will permit—in order to give an adequate welcome to the new customers who will come, or whom you MUST ASSUME you are entertaining.

Avoid Cut-Price Waste

An event of this sort has vastly more character and dignity than any mere “sale” could have. It is the kind of an event to hold in mid-season, when the cutting of prices and the quoting of bargain prices would be a foolish policy. But it is always practicable and a good business policy to brighten the advertising with A FEW SPECIAL OFFERINGS—not enough to discolor the occasion or cast the least suspicion of a bargain character upon it. They should really only be “stingers,” in small type, *at the bottom of the page*—not at all conspicuous, but merely casually mentioned as incidental to the day’s news. Don’t ever be afraid that the “bargain seeker” will miss the bargain. She will find it, no matter how small the type, in such an announcement as I am suggesting, and she will be all the more impressed and the more eager to get it, by reason of the restraint with which the news is published. The bargain in BIG TYPE at the top of the page is widely looked upon today as “bait”; but the little paragraph, crowded in at the bottom, following a reception announcement, always makes the impression that *it was too important to leave out and just had to be crowded in.*

The Advertising to Be Used

The first newspaper announcement of "New Customers' Week" should be a very dignified invitation, with general statements about the various new merchandise and possibly the little special items at the bottom. The second day's advertising should still carry the heading "New Customers' Week," but it should tell more about the fine new merchandise, and this policy should be continued during the week. Then a special bargain day might be arranged for the week, such as, "Friday is Special Economy Day in our New Customers' Week," and this one advertisement might be entirely devoted to specials, if you really have them available.

But the object of the entire effort should be to *demonstrate what a fine store you have* to the people who are not fully acquainted with it. Along with that you can

1. Show people what a splendid array of new merchandise you have for the new season.
2. Show your HOSPITALITY to your visitors.
3. Prove that your prices are RIGHT for the quality of goods supplied.
4. Prove that you are giving exceptionally pleasing service to your customers.

Don't fall down on the fourth count. Don't make all this effort and have it turn into a disastrous demonstration that you have a poorly managed store and that you give careless and discourteous service. Key up your entire organization for this event, and then try to maintain this higher standard you have reached right through the year.

XXIII

MAKING SALES BY TELEPHONE

Customers Always "in Call"

Merchants have not yet discovered the vast sales-making possibilities of the telephone, except in isolated instances. By its means the clever and tactful salesperson may call on any customer he or she desires, at any time of the day, any day. And, if the message is cleverly planned, the call will be considered a thoughtful service, instead of an interruption, by the person called to the phone. There is a right and wrong way to do everything.

Suppose you take the next nasty day, when customers fear to venture out, and have one of your most tactful saleswomen call up one of her well-known customers, in some such manner as this:

"Good morning, Mrs. Wilson—isn't this an awful morning! I don't wonder that you didn't come out this morning. Very few of my customers had the courage to come through the rain and sleet, and I have so little to do that I thought I would call you up and see if there wasn't something I could do for you downtown since you couldn't come out yourself."

Then Mrs. Wilson replies:

"Why, Miss Smith, there isn't a thing I want from the store; but I wish the storm would let up, for Mary is having a little party this afternoon, and I wanted to get some favors at the candy store; but I will have to let them go, I guess—I'm sorry you don't sell them, for you could pick them out for me and send them up."

"Oh, can I, Mrs. Wilson? That will be a little picnic for

me, I just love to look over those things. If you'll trust me to do it, I will run over to 'The Crescent' and pick them out for you and have them send them up. How many shall I get, and how much do you want me to pay for them?"

"Why that will be awfully good of you, Miss Smith; but it seems like putting you to a lot of trouble."

"Not a bit. It will be lots of fun."

"Well, there will be just eight children, and I thought of paying 25c apiece for the favors. And, while you are on the phone, Miss Smith, I wish you would pick me out a half-dozen good 25c towels and have them sent over. I saw them in your advertisement, but I thought I wouldn't bother about them now. And are those special \$3.95 blankets so good?"

"I haven't seen them, Mrs. Wilson; but you know we are very careful about telling the truth in our advertising; and, if you like, I'll go over and examine them, and send you a nice pair, if I think you'll like them."

"Please do, Miss Smith. You were awfully kind to call me up. It will be such a relief to have those favors without having to go out in the storm to get them. Good-bye! Thank you so much!"

Making Friends—Helpfulness Pays

No, Mrs. Wilson didn't want a thing from the store, until she began to feel grateful for a courtesy. And that is always the way when some trifling little favor is done for a customer. She can never rest until she has made a purchase as compensation; and she will talk and talk about your store's being so accommodating, and about Miss Smith's being such a pleasant and thoughtful saleswoman and having such good taste.

Then there is the other and more direct angle to the telephone selling. Special goods are being advertised. They may be bargains, or they may be fine new things; or, even goods not advertised, provided they possess real news value. The

clever saleswoman calls up a customer she knows, who she thinks would be interested in knowing about the goods, and she says:

"Good morning, Mrs. Wilson, I'm sorry to bring you to the phone, but I thought I had something interesting to tell you. We have just gotten in some of the loveliest blouses that I've seen this spring, and there is a blue chiffon here that I think you'd like to see. It looks just like you, and I'm afraid it may be sold before you come in, and there is only one in your size. Can't you run down and see it sometime today?"

Or this:

"Good morning, Mrs. Wallace. Did you see our advertisement, last evening, about the stockings—six pairs for a dollar? If you can use a few more, I know you wouldn't want to miss getting some of these. They are really splendid for the price."

"Good. I'll pick out six in size $7\frac{1}{2}$, and six in size $8\frac{1}{2}$. Thank you so much! Anything else I can send you? Good-bye!"

The Results of Suggestion

Today it is estimated that suggestion sells more goods than necessity. If you wait for people to think up their own requirements, business will drag frightfully; for stockings may be darned almost eternally, unless something suggests that new ones be purchased. Newspaper advertising suggests things continuously; your windows are making suggestions and your counters are doing their part. But a vast number of people miss most of your advertising; they may not pass your windows and they may not enter your store, except on too few occasions. How shall you reach them with the vital suggestion?

The TELEPHONE is ALWAYS THERE—and the customer is at the other end—as completely available to a tactful and pleasant

presentation of your merchandise as though she stood on the other side of your counters. But how few stores are making use of this powerful and valuable selling factor!

Tact Is Vital

Of course, the telephone can be made an offensive nuisance, just as any salesperson may become a nuisance in a store, but you might as well quit employing salespeople, because they might become nuisances, as to avoid using the telephone for sales service, because bad use of it might be objectionable to your customers. In every selling activity the **PLAN** must be right, and the policy and methods must be completely laid out and systematized. In the first place it should be remembered that a vast deal of telephoning may be done without calling up the same customer more than **ONCE A MONTH!** It should be the absolute rule that every salesperson should promptly report every case where the person called to the phone showed annoyance at the call. Customers who seem pleased at being called may be called once a week. Most customers should not be called more frequently than twice a month—except for extraordinary occasions.

Systematize the Work

Salespeople should be asked to make out their own lists, but the lists should be carefully compared, and in most cases each customer assigned to one salesperson to whom the customer seemed most friendly. All sales should be carefully recorded on cards provided in a card-index for the purpose, showing dates when calls are made, exact information about sales which resulted, and the attitude of the customer toward the call on each occasion. Duplicates of these cards should be distributed among the salespeople to whom the customers are assigned. After each call a new date should be written on the card, indicating the first day on which it will be permissible to

make a new call for this particular customer. No call should be made before that date, except for some extraordinary reason. Some such card form as the following should be used:

Mrs. James Smith (Telephone, Main 1937)
 839 Jefferson St., City
 (Assigned to Ella Smith, #274)

| | | | |
|---------|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| Feb. 14 | Called about | Blouse. | Not interested. |
| " 28 | " " | Towels @ 19c. | Ordered 6. |
| Mch. 8 | " " | New Suits. | Came in Friday. |
| " 16 | " " | Bedspreads. | Seemed annoyed. |
| Apr. 3 | | | |

Record Customer's Attitude

By this method there will be a guiding plan for each salesperson. There will be definite information as to just how the telephone solicitation is being accepted by each customer. It will show what salespeople are getting best results, and proving themselves most efficient and tactful in selling by telephone.

If the telephone selling plan should develop large results you may eventually create a special department of it, and assign several people, who have proved themselves to be most expert at this work, to the business of telephone solicitation.

The telephone call will SUGGEST your store to people more frequently; it will *suggest* the buying of certain merchandise that they may not have thought of buying, and thus increase your business. The work must be done tactfully and intelligently, but if thus done may become a valuable factor in increasing sales and making friends for your store.

XXIV

BUILDING UP A REAL BUSINESS IN SHOES

An Undeveloped Field

The ordinary shoe business of a department store is either a joke or a calamity. In fact very few of even the well conducted big stores realize the vital point about selling shoes. Notwithstanding the fact that there is a separate buyer whom one would expect to have definitely different ideas, the shoe department in most stores is run like a women's suit department.

In buying the stock for the new season the shoe buyer's first thought is about the new fashions. He usually forgets all about what styles sold well during the past season, because his mind is possessed with the idea that all last season's shoes are out of date and out of style. Although he has lived among shoes and studied feet all his life, the shoe buyer rarely seems to realize that feet neither change their form, nor wear corsets. It seems to be the common policy to throw away all the business that has been built up during the past season and start off new again and build up a new business twice every year. Of course, men are more sensible about their shoes than women, and I realize that the shoe buyer has to cater to the demand of women who want the latest fashions in shoes.

Not Fashions Merely, But Fit

I also have a very definite memory of a servant girl who would stand over a laundry tub all day and then wear shoes two sizes too small at night. I can remember quite well the look of agony on her face when she would start out in the shoes, and I also know that when she bought new shoes she

persisted in buying the small size. After a while she had to be hauled to the doctor and was laid up in bed for weeks before she could get on her feet again. I know that there are a great many such foolish virgins, but I am quite sure that they are a very insignificant percentage of the customers of a shoe store. I do not believe that the foolish woman will ever blame herself for the punishment she gets from her shoes. I believe she will keep on trying one store after another and be of no value to any store.

Lasts Your Customers Want

One time I took up very seriously with a shoe buyer the fact that I could not find in stock shoes of the same last as I had previously bought. He expected me to buy the newer lasts when the new styles came in; but when I refused to purchase the new shoes he finally said that he would have a pair made for me on the old last. The next time I wanted to buy a pair of shoes the same condition existed, and I got my shoes in the same way. This led me to make an investigation. I interviewed one buyer after another in the store. They were all practical business men who wore good shoes. I went from the merchandise manager down. The questions and replies were practically the same in every case—

“Do you buy your shoes in this store?”

“Yes, I do.”

“Are you able to sit down and be fitted out of the regular stock?”

“No, the buyer has my last and he orders them specially for me.”

So I found that fifteen or twenty men in the store were having shoes made specially for them every time they needed a pair, requiring a special order, a special express package, and expensive special service. The fact that this was going on year after year did not seem to suggest anything to the

shoe buyer. It did not occur to him that if he could not please the men in the store there might be hundreds of other men whom he could not please with his new styles and new lasts.

I believe definitely in the vital importance of maintaining, year after year, complete stocks of the best fitting and most comfortable standard lasts. There may be variations of leathers, of tips, of eyelets, of heights, but it is my belief that the large body of shoe buyers will patronize the store that continuously maintains stocks of shoes that are comfortable to the wearers.

Information the Real Guide

If I were conducting a shoe business I would maintain two card cabinets. On the cards in one cabinet I would list the style numbers of the shoes and the names and addresses of the customers who bought each number. I would retain a space to indicate the dates when they repeated their purchases of that same number. In the other cabinet I would keep a card for every customer of the shoe department with name, address, size, and width worn. Then I would give the number of the shoe bought with the date of the purchase. I would keep this cabinet handy where the salesperson could immediately refer to it, as soon as the name of the customer could be learned, for information about what shoe was previously purchased by that person.

Of course, it is the customary thing to take off the customer's shoe and see the number and size; but very frequently a customer comes into the store wearing a very different shoe from the one previously purchased in your store, and also the shoe may not give very true information. After a few years a card cabinet would give a large amount of wonderfully valuable information to the shoe buyer. It would also provide an enormous amount of comfort and satisfaction to the shoe customer. It would save the trouble of trying and fitting the

various lasts on the various feet time after time. It would simplify the finding of shoes that would fit the customer, and the cross index would definitely tell the buyer how many people had bought that particular shoe that season and also show how many of the customers had bought that particular last more than once.

Avoid Discarding Wanted Lasts

With data of this sort in hand the buyer would be able to judge whether a certain style should be retained in stock or whether it should be dropped. If he has any doubt as to whether the customer would want that particular last during the coming season he could communicate with all the people who wore the shoe, either by letter or by a reply postal card, which would enable him to ask whether the customer liked the shoe and would be likely to want the same thing next season, or whether he did not expect to buy it again and for what reason. It would be very inexpensive to get this information about all the shoes he has in stock. Having got the information that the customer would probably want the shoes, he would not only receive a visit from that customer when ready to buy the shoes, but he would also be able to write a letter saying that the new shoes in that customer's last were now in stock in the wanted size, and would be shown when the customer found it convenient to come in, or would be sent home at any time desired without the necessity of a visit on the part of the customer, with the perfect assurance that the shoes would be right.

Men Especially

I believe that a shoe business of this sort, conducted with the full knowledge of the exact sizes and styles required for the majority of men customers, would become very large and successful. It would render a valuable service to the best men

in the community. A purchaser of such shoes would not be attracted to any bargain advertising, nor would he expect to find his shoes at less than the regular price. But every man would be satisfied, at last, in his shoe-buying. It would be a wonderfully profitable business to the store in any city where it might be tried. A little more effort would be required in adapting such a service to women. While there is no doubt that hundreds of women would want the same conservative styles year after year, and would buy them in the same practical manner as men, it would, of course, be true that many other women would want the newest fashions. But these new fashions could always be provided in lasts that would be comfortable to each customer and no clever shoe buyer would permit himself to be stocked up with badly fitting lasts, merely because the styles were different. Practically all the new styles valuable in any shoe stock could be made up in the lasts desired by his customers.

Service and a Good Business

There is probably no other line of merchandise in a department store that offers so many opportunities for giving gratifying service to customers as shoes. While, therefore, it is possible for the shoe department to waste most of its profits by the bad stock that it has to clean up at the end of the year, there is no other stock that gives so many definite opportunities for the buyer to be guided in his purchases.

Starting with the conservative business as a foundation, it should not be difficult to get all the latest style business possible in addition. But the store that can secure as customers for its shoe department all the men and women in its community who want to get the same comfortable shoes year after year will have a business that will pay a bigger profit at less cost than any other shoe business in the city, even if it never sold a shoe to a man or woman who wanted the latest style. No other

department of the house will have a stronger influence in bringing customers back to the store season after season, and year after year, than the shoe department which can always supply the comfortable shoe that the customer has always worn.

XXV

HOW DO YOU CATER TO MOTORISTS—THE BIGGEST MARKET IN THE TRADE?

A Nation's Changed Habits—and Dress

Several years ago at Wanamaker's we were discussing changed conditions in the trade, and some members of the conference were astounded when they learned that more than three hundred thousand automobiles were owned by people living in the State of New York, without counting those in New Jersey, just across the river, or those in the near-by parts of Connecticut, only twenty miles away. Over two hundred millions of dollars invested in automobiles meant the taking of a vast sum of money away from department store purchases, but it meant vastly more in the CHANGED HABITS of the people who owned them. It meant an enormous change in the APPAREL that people would wear—and the change affected upwards of a million of the best buying trade in the state.

Meeting the New Condition

As a direct result of that conference, the men's clothing buyer was hurried off to London to buy a fifty thousand dollar stock of automobile garments in the accepted styles of Europe. The buyers of women's apparel were in Paris at the time, and they were given liberal commissions to purchase suits, coats, millinery, veils, gloves, and all motoring accessories to be found. They also bought liberal stocks of motoring accessories in leather goods, toilet articles, lunch sets—everything that England, France, Germany, and Austria had devised for the use or the extravagance of the motorist. It may have

seemed like an enormous GAMBLE to most people, but it was progressive merchandising, based on a sound analysis of the new conditions. It was planned as coolly as the movement of a modern army.

When all this merchandise was at length assembled in New York it was displayed in a newly constructed "Burlington Arcade," built in the heart of the new Wanamaker building, and we did some spectacular advertising that got the attention of motorists all over the continent. Especially in New York City, the movement was an enormous success. People who had automobiles were mostly riding around in their old clothes, and thousands were glad to be shown what was *the correct thing in motoring apparel*. In a couple of weeks these apparently enormous stocks were "shot full of holes" and hurried re-orders had to be cabled.

A Store That Was Alive!

The best people in New York City, and from all over the country, were drawn to Wanamaker's and newly impressed with the fact that this store was keenly ALIVE to the requirements of the public and ready, far in advance of all competition, to serve the needs of automobilists. What other concerns were beginning to do in a small, timid, and fragmentary way, John Wanamaker was doing with assurance and courage—in THE BIGGEST WAY POSSIBLE, using to the utmost the resources of the best tailors and the best manufacturers in Europe. I thoroughly believe that the prompt and aggressive action at that time was one of the big factors in increasing the Wanamaker volume of business, just at the time when most people thought it would have to begin to dwindle. It certainly is one of the reasons why a mile or so of automobiles may be seen clustered around the vicinity of Ninth Street during the shopping hours, notwithstanding the fact that the Wanamaker Store is a mile and a half from the shopping center—and the

Wanamaker volume of business still remains the LARGEST IN NEW YORK CITY.

A Vast Buying Public

The automobile business is not getting any smaller yet. Probably a million and a half more cars will be sold this year. These people will want new motoring supplies, or the people that buy their old cars will want them. There is not a village, a hamlet, a town, or a city, large or small, in the whole United States, that will not be affected in a definite degree by the automobile's influence.

Part of this new business will come as an immediate demand, because the people themselves feel the need of certain things and will go and hunt them up. But that is the small end of the POSSIBILITIES of this perfectly stupendous prospect for sales by merchants everywhere. The big money that will be made from motorists should come from entirely NEW BUSINESS that merchants themselves will STIR UP by their merchandising and advertising activity.

What Motorists Will Buy

Motorists, generally, are *very susceptible to temptation*. They are *extravagant in their habits*, or they soon learn to be. When they are told about things that they need for their use on the car, they soon begin to *itch to have them*. A man may "cuss out" his wife for wanting a new dress to wear to church, but he'll "cuss her out" worse, perhaps, for not buying the right togs to wear in the automobile.

A "big bargain sale" may add to the store's "volume," but it usually makes a sad cut in the profits. The real way to MAKE MORE MONEY is to discover ways to go after

NEW BUSINESS THAT PAYS FULL PROFIT.

One of the biggest gold mines that I can see, for merchants everywhere, is in *developing a big business among motorists*.

This means, first, to install or increase various departments of motoring supplies. I should carry a full supply of tools—chains, repair kits, oil—maybe tires. I should stop only where it was not good business to go.

I should have sufficient stocks of all kinds of motoring apparel for men and women, if the store had regular apparel departments. I should have every possible motoring convenience. Then I should *advertise all these things* in so thorough a manner that both men and women who go motoring would feel ashamed, or actually UNSAFE, to go out without them. One of the chief functions of advertising is to educate people *into the feeling of the need for things*.

A New Store Interest

The inaugurating of this motoring apparel and accessory department in your business IN A BIG WAY will do many things:

It will give new and valuable publicity to your store. It will prove that you are ALIVE and looking forward. It will actually bring valuable motoring trade to your store. Customers will buy many other things besides the motoring goods. It will create new interest among people who do not have cars. It will give your own people a new interest in things. It will develop a new era of profit-making for you, if rightly done. The new interest will awaken a fine stimulus in you personally.

When you do it, don't be afraid to MAKE A NOISE ABOUT IT. Create the sort of ENTHUSIASM that will make motorists *eager to see the new things* that you have to show them, and then will not be satisfied until they own them.

XXVI

FIGHTING FOR THE READY-TO-WEAR BUSINESS

Competition of the Specialty Stores

From all over the country comes the report that department stores are losing the ready-to-wear business to the multitude of new specialty stores that are stealing it away from them. What is the cause? Why are the weak stores taking this valuable business from the strong?

One Western merchant expressed it this way: "The weakness of the small store is the cause of its strength." The *big store*, with its big buyer, always wants to do BIG THINGS and buys in *big quantities*, thus *killing the style* by making everything common. The little store does not have enough capital to buy in big quantities. So, in its effort to make a wide showing with a small outlay, it buys as many styles as possible, usually *only one or two garments of a style*, and thus its styles are EXCLUSIVE. Women do not meet themselves so often on the street. They don't see the same garments that they are wearing *sold out at a bargain price* and discredited among their friends.

Even when the small store does have some of the same styles as the large stores it *has only a few*, and only a few customers are offended by the bargain sale. Then the little store being able to buy only *a few garments at a time*, is able to buy oftener, has to buy oftener, hence is always in the market, is *always getting something new*, is never tied up with a heavy stock of old stuff that it must sell before it can buy its new goods.

Exclusiveness Counts in Clothes

It certainly is strange that the alleged "big" buyer for the large store can't learn this simple lesson. Today he is being WIPE OFF THE MAP in hundreds of big stores, and he doesn't know what is hitting him. In the first place, women don't want to wear the same "uniform" that they see on other women. They don't need to either. In the next place, they don't want suits and coats that are going to be on the bargain table next week, or next month. And they don't have to. They are leaving the department stores by the thousands because the steam roller is out of date. The specialty store has discovered itself and its strength, and the big store is still WEARING BLINDERS. The specialty store is operated *on a totally different principle* from the department in a big store. Women like the individuality and protection of the specialty store principle.

But there is no reason why the department store should not operate on the specialty store principle, except that the owners and the buyers *have not learned to respect* that principle, do not realize its superiority and tremendous popularity, and, except in a few isolated cases, are not using it. And then, because they have ABUNDANT CAPITAL, they are easily *tempted beyond control*, even when they really plan better buying.

Overbuying Kills "the Goose"

For several years we have been talking about the profit-making value of rapid turnovers, and merchants have been fighting to control stocks for mere money-making reasons. Buyers have been constantly overruling the merchandise manager because he thought it was mere stingy capitalization. I don't believe that either the buyer or the merchandise manager have ever yet realized that *over-buying has been killing the ready-to-wear business* in department stores.

Big buying can't possibly mark down the prices as much as it marks down the styles and the desirability of the garments. How long is it going to take the buyer to learn that it is the volume of the year's PURCHASES that make a store's business desirable to a manufacturer, not the size of one order, or the quantity of one style that is bought at one time?

The Way Back for the Big Store

If you want to get back and hold the ready-to-wear business in your city, the following are some of the things that I believe you must do:

1. Avoid buying large quantities of coats and suits in the same style.
2. Avoid accumulating surplus stocks of garments that must be sold out at cut prices.
3. When buying special lots, for sale purposes, be sure that the STYLES are DIFFERENT from garments sold in regular stock at full prices.
4. Buy SMALL QUANTITIES of each style, and BUY NEW MODELS instead of sending in "repeat orders," thus having *new goods constantly, and preventing styles* purchased by your customers from getting "common."

These policies eliminate the growing cause of much criticism against department store ready-to-wear garments. They will put you in condition to begin to compete with the specialty stores, and to try to win back the trade.

Where a Fight Is Necessary

Next, if matters in this direction have reached such a point in your community that you want to put more fight into your campaign for the ready-to-wear business, I would

advise some such policy as the following: Select one special price figure in women's suits. Make it a figure that will command the broadest interest and one that you can *continue all season*. On this particular line of suits plan a "mark-up" of 20 to 25 per cent regardless of what your regular "mark-up" may be, and live right up to it, in order to make a *definite and continuous impression of extraordinary value on regular goods*. Buy the best goods you possibly can, right through the season, *for this special price group*, and DON'T MAKE THE FATAL MISTAKE of trying to MAKE MONEY on the line after it is started. Use it *to kill your competitor's reputation* for beating you in values. Use it *to make your own reputation*.

Make your money on your other lines—at other prices.

Be Original

Use the same policy in coats, in blouses, in petticoats, in kimono's, and any other line that needs fighting for. Cut out the eternal "bargain" and "cut price" scream, which nobody believes, and which so discredits your suits and coats that people who want nice things, stylish things, ARE AFRAID TO BUY IN YOUR STORE, and so are not tempted no matter what sensational prices you print. If you select \$15 as your price, and pay \$11.25 for the suits, on a 25 per cent profit basis, for goodness' sake don't RUIN THE WHOLE CAMPAIGN by calling the suits "Worth \$17.50," as they would be on the usual 50 per cent profit basis! Stand pat on "Our SMITH AND JOHNSON \$15 SUITS FOR WOMEN"—"Best the Money can Buy," "New Models Just Arrived This Week."

New Styles Every Week

There is still time to save the ready-to-wear business for your store, if you will begin to respect your garments and not make people suspicious about the styles, by smirching them

with some such statement as "\$15—made to sell for \$22.50." Have FEW OF A KIND, but a wide variety of good styles. Have NEW STYLES EVERY WEEK. Don't make "bargains" out of your regular models. Advertise the DESIRABILITY of the goods. Don't place them under suspicion by making people think they are "reduced." In each line of garments, maintain continuously throughout the season a one price group that will be a *commanding value*. Never claim that it is anything but your "*regular line*" at that price.

If you have the nerve to do this, honestly, right down to the ground, your competitors will have hard sledding against you next season, and you may have less competition in the future.

PART III

SPECIAL PROMOTION FEATURES

ROBERT OGDEN, the managing partner of the Wanamaker Store in New York, said once: "This store is operated on the twin-screw system—regular business and 'special business.'" Serving regular customers day by day, he meant, and presenting special offerings to win new business or to stimulate larger buying by regular customers.

The merchant's first duty is to create a good store, one people like for its attractive merchandise and excellent service. But GROWTH is stimulated chiefly by special appeals, especially through freshly attractive ways of exploiting regular goods at regular prices.

Cutting prices is the resort of the unresourceful.

The chapters of this Part suggest special devices for interesting the public in the regular merchandise, in under-priced offerings natural to the season, in the healthful disposal of end-of-season stocks.

Utilizing times and seasons, store anniversaries and customers' anniversaries, brings many profitable opportunities. Those suggested here may stimulate the reader to utilize others that local conditions may create for him.

XXVII

CELEBRATING YOUR STORE'S ANNIVERSARY

Take Your Store Seriously

The celebrating of an Anniversary Day is of the utmost value to a store. It enables a store to present itself to the public from a different angle, and to add a strong touch of sentiment to its appeal. A store gains in importance in the public mind very largely in accordance with the seriousness with which it takes itself, provided of course, that there is worthy storekeeping and merchandising back of it. Incidentally the Anniversary celebration provides one of the most valuable opportunities of the year for creating a big sales event. The store that goes along, day in and day out, year after year, simply presenting its usual merchandise may establish a sound business if it is a well-conducted store, but by the planning and promoting of several important occasions during the year, it makes a much stronger and entirely different appeal to the public, and establishes itself in a much stronger way as an institution of its city.

How Long to Wait

No other occasion all the year around presents so many valuable possibilities as the Anniversary event. Some might say that a store should not talk about itself until it has achieved a certain amount of success. Some merchants would never think of celebrating an Anniversary until they had been in business twenty-five years. But I can remember how successfully we promoted the Fifth Anniversary Sale of the Wanamaker Store in New York, and the first, second,

and third Anniversaries of the Gimbel Store in New York. There is a definite story to tell in each case. Of course, there was a much bigger story to tell about the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Wanamaker business, but after all it is not a question of how many years a store has been in business; it is always a question of how much a store has done. Some stores make history in a year.

Any well-conducted store has its successes to point back to and has its future ambitions to talk about. The Anniversary event gives the merchant, or the man who speaks for him, an opportunity to talk confidentially and directly to the public. It lifts the store far above the ordinary bargain advertising and compels people to recognize its position as an institution in the community.

Use the Occasion to the Limit

The prestige secured on the Anniversary occasion depends largely upon the manner in which the event is exploited. Most stores merely list a big array of Anniversary offerings in merchandise and lose all opportunity of making the public think more deeply about them. Of course, every Anniversary occasion should present its extraordinary merchandise offerings, but they should also follow and be secondary to the real Anniversary announcement. You have a chance to talk to the whole public in a broad way.

Of the multitude of things which can be done, the things which a store chooses to do should be the logical actions of such an organization as is concerned. The special "announcement" which is placed at the end of the chapter will suggest not only how an Anniversary announcement should be written, but also what should be the proper attitude of mind of the progressive merchant toward his public. The plans for an Anniversary celebration should be made at least a month before the day.

Anniversary Parade

One of the most spectacular things that a store can do is to plan an Anniversary parade. Its big delivery trucks can be made into handsome floats, bearing decorations that will typify the activities of the store. The delivery wagons may also be decorated and equipped with signs or banners carrying mottoes and brief declarations of principles in reference to the store's service, its merchandise, and its square dealing. As a general thing, probably, the parade would be planned for daytime. In some places, no doubt, it would be most desirable to have it occur at night. If elaborately prepared and artistically designed the parade would be one of the most impressive and valuable pieces of advertising that the store could do. It would all depend upon the originality and ingenuity of the decorators. The best band, of course, or perhaps more than one band, should be employed to lead or follow the parade. The main float of the parade would naturally show a reproduction of the store building, with a figure symbolic of commerce beside or in front of it. Another float would represent spectacular displays of various kinds of merchandise, each having a symbolic figure or a group of figures.

Decorating Your Building

The store building should be decorated and should have prominently shown on it the word "Anniversary," with the date of the founding of the store on the one side and the present year on the other. It might also be well to put the word "Fifth" or "Twenty-fifth," or whatever the number might be, to indicate whatever Anniversary is being celebrated. The decoration inside of the store would, of course, be vitally important. At every point possible there should be a card or artistic device bearing the caption "Fifth Anniversary."

Naturally there will be extraordinary merchandise offerings in every part of the store and each should have its

prominent sign indicating that it is an "Anniversary Offering." Neat and quite legible signs should be prepared for the delivery wagons to carry the day before the Anniversary Sale and during its continuance. Simply the words "Anniversary Sale Begins Tomorrow" for the sign the day before the event, and "Anniversary Sale Now in Progress" to be used daily while the sale is going on. This is a very valuable method of advertising, and if done neatly, will not cheapen the appearance of the delivery wagons. An attractive leaflet announcing the Anniversary Sale should be prepared and distributed during the week preceding the opening of the event. This should be put in all packages delivered from the store, and it should also be sent to your entire mailing list.

Naturally your newspaper advertising will be the most important factor in the success of the sale. A small announcement of the coming of the Anniversary event should be made in the regular advertising columns several days in advance, and in a space slightly increased each day following, until the big announcement is made, either the evening before or on the morning of the sale, according to your advertising conditions.

A Pity Not to Make Profits

Many stores accept a very large loss in making their Anniversary offerings in order to have genuine bargains. It seems a pity though that such a valuable occasion should not be made to produce large profits. Nor is it necessary. It is very easy to secure the bargains that you require at definitely reduced prices from the manufacturers if you do your preparatory buying long enough ahead. Manufacturers are always willing to co-operate with a good store for an occasion of this sort, and this is particularly true if you do not ask any manufacturer to give you a very large quantity of the thing that you wish to buy for your Anniversary Sale.

Special Anniversary Offerings

Anniversary bargains should be new, perfect goods of the most desirable character in every department of the store. No old or damaged goods should ever be offered in an Anniversary Sale. You should be able to say to the manufacturer, "I want ten dozen of these dollar bedspreads that I can sell for 72c in my Anniversary Sale, and I must make a profit to pay the expenses of conducting the sale." By confining the purchase to an amount far smaller than your ordinary buying, and by assuring the manufacturer that the price he quotes you for your Anniversary offering will have no effect whatever on your reordering for your regular stock at his regular price, you will get real co-operation. But if the manufacturer has any fear that if he breaks his price for a small Anniversary lot, you will hold him down to that price for your future reorders, he will not be inclined to meet your wishes. You must give him the most definite assurance that you will not take advantage of his co-operation in such a manner.

If every buyer in the house gets such an Anniversary offering from six or eight concerns that he does business with, you will have a fine collection of genuine Anniversary offerings of the kind that will be highly appreciated by your customers and a credit to your store. Such offerings will also tremendously enthuse your entire organization. They will give new inspiration to your advertising manager, and your managers and salespeople will be able to enthuse the customers because the offerings will be so different from those that are presented in an ordinary bargain sale.

The Announcement

Here is copy for an Anniversary announcement. This copy should be corrected and modified to suit the conditions and history of the store that is celebrating its Anniversary.

Tomorrow Begins the Celebration of**OUR FIFTH ANNIVERSARY**

It is an occasion of very large interest for us, for sentimental and practical reasons. It marks the day when we look back upon our own successful efforts and our city's interest and support of our store, but it more particularly causes us to look forward with renewed determination to make this store more worthy of its important position of service to the people of our community and the country round about.

It is one of the principles of our business to recognize the position of responsibility in which we are placed by being the owners of an institution that lives and succeeds in proportion to its usefulness to its public.

We are not here merely to sell you some merchandise today and this year, on which we shall make a certain percentage of profit. Our success depends on something far more important to both of us than that. We know that we must be good servants. We must win your approbation in little things as well as in big things. We are quite as anxious to be useful to our patrons when doing some small service, when supplying some article of small cost on which there is practically no profit and doing the service promptly, courteously, and helpfully, as a demonstration of our usefulness to our public, as when performing a larger service.

We cordially thank the ever increasing number of friends who have contributed so much to the success we have so far achieved, and we take this opportunity to express our determination to make our store much more worthy of your patronage in the future than it has ever been in the past.

We cannot expect the public to take the same sentimental interest in this week's celebration that we do ourselves, and for this reason we have been making preparations for several months to provide abundant intrinsic reasons to cause large public interest in

Our Anniversary Sale Week

Every department of our entire Store has provided special Anniversary Offerings in the newest and most desirable merchandise. It will be offered, beginning tomorrow morning, and throughout the week, as long as the various offerings last, at very large savings from usual prices.

Naturally many of the groups are in quite limited quantities so that early shoppers will get the broadest and best selections. New items will be added from day to day to provide a complete week of extraordinary Anniversary Offerings.

The following are representative items:—

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.....

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XXVIII

ORGANIZING A SERIES OF SOUVENIR DAYS

The Little Courtesy Is Valued

One store in a little town in a modest way created the idea of giving away a simple souvenir to all its customers periodically. It was a tremendous success. And yet the idea seems to be very little known and has rarely been used. Everybody enjoys getting something for nothing, no matter how small it may be. Even a blotter for the desk, or a pencil for the pocket, is appreciated when received. This is the reason why trading stamps and coupons are so alluring, though their intrinsic value is small.

Souvenir Day is of value in attracting the crowds that would belong to the store that gave 50 free trading stamps. Souvenir Days may be conducted by stores that do not give trading stamps or coupons. It is also quite as valuable for stores that do give trading stamps, because it does not at all interfere with the usual trading stamp offerings. There are two methods of securing value from the Souvenir Day idea. One is never to let people know what day the souvenirs are to be given out and thus make people come every day in the hope that the surprise may happen that day. This particular policy, while it does not bring big crowds on a single day, may prove to be very much the better plan in the long run. It will not only have people expecting something from the store every day, but it will make the souvenir a pure gift and thus eliminate the idea of using it as bait. However, it is no new thing in storekeeping to bait a hook, and it should have a powerful influence in bringing people to the store done in either way.

A Sales Limit Helps

Suppose you give souvenirs only to people who present checks for purchases of \$1 or more. Customers who come into the store and spend less may be advised that by purchasing a little more they will secure a souvenir free. Of course, the amount of \$1 may be on one check or on a number of checks, but it will push up the amount of sales and reduce the cost of the souvenir by requiring that customers shall present checks amounting to \$1 or more, in order to secure a souvenir at the souvenir desk. The plan will be to make an estimate of how many sales checks amounting to \$1 and more are made out in your store on a busy day. Then provide a safe quantity of the souvenirs to take care of the largest possible number of purchases on a single day.

Each merchant will decide for himself how much he can afford to pay for his souvenirs, and naturally, after organizing the plan to have a Souvenir Day once a month, the values of the souvenir will vary from time to time. On certain red-letter days the store may be perfectly willing to invest upwards of a dollar in each souvenir. At other times the cost of the article may be as little as 5c.

Using Free Samples

For several months of the year it will, no doubt, be easy to secure from large manufacturers free samples of their products in full standard sizes. Manufacturers are continually seeking opportunities to introduce their commodities to influential stores in a striking way, and the merchant would permit the manufacturer to enclose with his sample article any advertising matter that he might desire, provided it was not offensive in its style and form. The fact that the sample was given away on the regular Souvenir Day would carry with it an impression of the article that the manufacturer could not possibly secure by any ordinary distribution. The customer

would be quite as much delighted at securing a bottle of perfume, or a tube of tooth paste, or a certain cooking utensil supplied free by the manufacturer, as she would many other articles that had no advertising incentive about them.

Give Things of Real Value

Combined effort on the part of the merchandising manager, the advertising manager, the buyers, and the merchant himself, might produce a series of souvenirs covering the twelve months of the entire year and all of them practically contributed by manufacturers. The manufacturers might be quite as happy to accept such an opportunity for advertising as the store would be to save expense. But there never should be any doubt about the definite value and desirability of the sample to be distributed. It would be vastly better for the store to give away for itself a 5c cube of pins without any advertising on it, than to give away a 25c bottle of perfume that was spoiled by offensive advertising sent with it. It is, however, easy for the manufacturer to provide advertising matter that will be no more noticeable than the little booklet that comes in the package that is sold to the customer over the counter.

Here are a few desirable, inexpensive souvenirs:

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Gloves | Tooth Brush |
| Silver or Gilt Photo Frame | Towel |
| Silver Spoon | Alarm Clock |
| Silver Pencil | Ingersoll Watch |
| Box of Writing Paper | Cake of Soap |
| Box of Candy | Buttonhook |
| Doily | Saucepan |
| China Plate | Corsage of Artificial Flowers |
| Piece of Cut Glass | Barrette |
| Book | Hat Pin |
| Pair of Shoe Trees | Piece of Neckwear |
| Fountain Pen | Bottle of Cold Cream |
| Pair of Scissors | Book of Recipes |
| Inkstand | Package of Seeds |

Make It a Surprise

I should advise that Souvenir Day be inaugurated without any advertising at all. In advertising it the first time customers might be led to expect too much, but if a certain day that is not too busy, as Tuesday for instance, should be selected, a souvenir might be handed to every customer who comes into the store, regardless of the amount purchased. This would create a tremendous amount of talk, especially if the article went out in a little box stamped on the lid

SOUVENIR DAY

Compliments of

(Your firm name here)

Thus, although the article might cost only 5c or 10c, every person who got it would be pleased and would talk about it and create a most favorable impression, because nobody would have been expecting it and nobody would expect more than was received. This would establish the precedent as to value and the next time it might be modestly stated in the advertising that tomorrow would be Souvenir Day and each visitor to the store would receive a nice souvenir by calling at the special souvenir desk and presenting duplicate checks showing purchases of \$1 or more.

Easy to Safeguard It

Of course, it might be proved that it would well repay a store to give away a souvenir to every customer coming into the house on Souvenir Day. I should have a great deal of faith in this being the case; but if there was doubt of the matter and a fear that certain people might get a large number of the free articles, the matter could be safeguarded by requiring

checks for purchases to be shown. As customers would retain these checks a rubber stamp should be provided for the person at the souvenir desk, so that the checks could be stamped "Souvenir presented" on all checks that had been recognized. I believe that it will be found that this policy of giving away souvenirs once a month will build up a reputation and bring a bigger crowd to the store on Souvenir Day than could be brought by large reductions on the price of a great deal of merchandise. Certainly the expense would be very much less, no matter how much was paid for the souvenirs.

XXIX

THE SALES POSSIBILITIES OF THE BRIDAL OR WEDDING ANNIVERSARY "SHOWER"

Coordinating Gifts for Weddings, etc.

A very interesting social event can be created by the "shower." The occasion does not require that any large amount of money be spent by any individual, for even though each person invests only the price of a theater ticket the combined result of the shower to the recipient is a very large and delightful contribution of useful articles. May and June are the chief wedding months. This means that they are the months of wedding anniversaries and this provides a very fertile field for sales by the wide-awake store. Almost all occasions of this sort are brought about by suggestion. The matter may be brought up by a friend who happens to think of it, and I am suggesting to you that the matter be cleverly and tactfully suggested by the store.

A Real Service to the Public

The "shower" is a most valuable means of multiplying sales made through your store, because it gives such a definite and advantageous reason for making all the purchases at the same place. For instance, we know what an awful mixture of things goes to the bride where there is no co-operation in the matter of selection. The different pieces of silver never match; the linens are in all kinds of patterns; and there is always a disheartening amount of duplication. The bride fails to get many things that she wants, while she gets a lot of totally useless things.

Brings Many Customers

If the store gets in touch with the right people it can promote a well-guided shower that will be a delight to the bride, and a gratification to all those who share in it, and will make a big volume of business for the store. For instance, after getting in communication with a few of the bride's friends, certain patterns of silver and linens may be selected, and the committee may determine the exact one to be chosen for the shower. Then the store will make a display of all the various pieces that are obtainable in that pattern, showing the collection to the friends as they come in, and pointing out what pieces have already been purchased by earlier friends. Thus in silver, the same pattern may be purchased by all, and the same style of engraving can be used throughout. In linens, the same pattern may be selected by all, and the same embroidering done on all the various pieces.

Under this plan the shrewd merchant will see how he is making it certain, also, that future sales will come to him, because the bride will want to MATCH her patterns when she makes future purchases; and she will come to the store where the wedding gifts were purchased, to be sure of having them the same.

Making It Easy for Friends

The getting up of a shower, either for a prospective bride or for an anniversary occasion, is sometimes a good deal of work for the individuals who suggest it and endeavor to carry out the plans. If some bureau established in the store will organize the shower idea and plan to do most of the detail work, it can render a service that will be welcomed by the friends of the recipient of the shower, as well as by the beneficiary. The local newspapers frequently contain announcements of coming anniversaries. They always contain notices of the anniversaries of important people in the community.

It should be the first duty of the store's "Shower Bureau" to collect all the data possible about weddings, birthdays, and anniversaries. The local newspapers and all items about events of this sort should be read every day. All wedding notices or engagement notices should be collected and pasted in a book indexed for the purpose or kept on a file.

Card Index of Weddings, Birthdays, etc.

Naturally it is important that the names of friends of the prospective bride or woman whose anniversary is to be celebrated, should be known and for this reason it would be well to create a card cabinet in which the following data would be kept: names of the attendants, names of guests at the wedding, names of relatives with their relationship stated, name of the church where the wedding took place so that the church associations would be known if wanted.

A similar card cabinet record should be kept of births so that showers may be suggested for the baby, and birthday parties later on when the children grow older, because a list like this will become a permanent asset of the store. As the card cabinet of names grows there should be a cross index cabinet arranged according to the monthly dates, so that the anniversaries could be watched as they come along and plans made at least a month ahead for the celebration. The person in charge of the shower bureau will be able to keep adding new information secured from the social news items in the newspapers or by personal inquiry.

Tactful Letters of Suggestion

In making suggestions for a shower, form letters should be prepared which will be mailed to one or two of the closest friends of the person for whom the shower is suggested. This letter would state that as the party addressed is a friend of Mrs. Blank, whose anniversary occurs on the date named, that

perhaps the person addressed would be willing to have placed before her a plan by which a shower party could be organized for the benefit of the person whose anniversary was to be celebrated, and an appointment would be requested when a representative of the shower bureau could call on the person addressed, explaining the plan and its cost.

For instance, in the case of a person who had been married the year before, it would be a cotton anniversary, and the store should have a printed leaflet to be sent out by the shower bureau, which would suggest a long list of appropriate shower gifts of cotton, indicating the prices of each article. This list would be used by the friends when they got together to talk over what they would carry to the shower, and the list would aid them in distributing the various purchases to avoid needless duplications and provide an ideal assortment. The representative of the shower bureau would be able to give very helpful advice in this matter, so that the cost would be divided equally among all, or arranged according to the individual ideas of each if they wanted to spend varying amounts. The shower bureau would also make plans so it could engage the music, the floral decorations, and even the catering if desired. It would also plan to have the shower of articles delivered at the right moment in a trunk or in some more convenient manner than the usual aggregation of store bundles. As this plan developed there would be many features of service that would add materially to the effectiveness of the celebration, all of which could be provided by the store from its regular facilities, and would save needless expense on the part of the people who were giving the shower.

New Business

It is very evident that during the year a bureau of this sort could create a very large volume of absolutely new business, which would not otherwise come either to the store that inaug-

urated the idea nor to any other store. This is the most valuable sort of selling work. Aside from that, if the work were cleverly done by tactful people, it would prove to be a useful and entertaining service that would be highly appreciated in the community.

The bringing about of these interesting and delightful social events, costing the people who give the shower very little individual expenditure, creates hundreds of friends for the store, at the same time securing a very large additional volume of sales from an inauguration of a fad for "Showers."

The Anniversaries

The list of anniversaries is as follows:

| | |
|---------------|---------------------|
| First | Cotton |
| Second | Paper |
| Third | Leather |
| Fourth | Fruit and Flowers |
| Fifth | Wooden |
| Sixth | Sugar |
| Seventh | Woolen |
| Eighth | India Rubber |
| Ninth | Willow |
| Tenth | Tin |
| Eleventh | Steel |
| Twelfth | Silk and Fine Linen |
| Thirteenth | Lace |
| Fourteenth | Ivory |
| Fifteenth | Crystal |
| Twentieth | China |
| Twenty-fifth | Silver |
| Thirtieth | Pearl |
| Fortieth | Ruby |
| Fiftieth | Golden |
| Seventy-fifth | Diamond |

A Compliment as Well

A card cabinet of information, as suggested above, will also provide a wonderfully useful mailing list of husbands, who may be reached a month before the anniversary with the suggestion of a gift for the wife. With such reliable information in your hands you will be able to tell the husband just exactly what he should purchase for that particular anniversary and thus give him an idea that he would not otherwise receive. Personal attention of this nature on the part of a store is almost always taken as a compliment by the people who receive it. The suggestions would usually be welcomed and acted upon year after year.

XXX

OTHER WAYS OF MAKING SALES OUT OF JUNE WEDDINGS

June Needs Promotion Work

June is a big month in the sales calendar, or a poor one, according to the way in which the business is merchandised and promoted. Many years ago, John Wanamaker put new life into the month of June, by importing the Bon Marche idea of a June White Sale. It was an enormous success, as you know. But, in the excitement of competition, the date was set forward into May, a month that needed no such extra stimulation, and June lost a big business asset, for Wanamaker's, and Gimbel Brothers', and for many other stores that followed their lead. It would have been vastly better for all, if the June White Sale had been maintained for the month of June.

Its Large Opportunities

But June has other large possibilities for big business, if they are properly organized and promoted. The June bride creates a center of interest with enormous possibilities for actual sales, but also providing the pretext for exhibitions and demonstrations that will promote large sales of goods to women who are not prospective brides, and who even have no wedding gifts to buy. There are five different and distinct directions in which to make the sales appeal in reference to June weddings:

1. Actual sales to the prospective bride and her family:
Table Linens, Towels, etc.

- Sheets and Pillow-Cases
- Other Goods for the Home
- Materials for the Wedding Gown
- Lingerie and Corsets
- Stockings, Shoes, Gloves, etc.
- 2. Wedding gifts, the appeal to friends of the bride:
 - Silverware
 - Linens
 - Blankets and Bedspreads
 - Rugs
 - China and Glassware
 - Percolators and Other Artistic Housewares
- 3. The housekeeping things that will be wanted when the new home is furnished:

Every prospective bride will eagerly read suggestions for making her new home efficient and comfortable. A cleverly compiled circular, describing the unusual housekeeping conveniences, as well as listing the standard articles, will start the new home-makers to compiling a list that may bring a nice order to your store, for things that might not otherwise be sold—at least by you.

- 4. The apparel that will be wanted by the guests who are to be invited to June weddings:

Here is opportunity to make carefully thought out suggestions, full of the right kind of advice and information about what to wear to a wedding in the afternoon, or evening—for men, women, and children—suits, dresses, neckwear, gloves, stockings, socks, shoes, and the like. Often it is necessary only to suggest the right thing to make a sale of what might not otherwise be thought of by the invited guest.

- 5. The sales that will be made because of this kind of advertising to people who may not be interested in weddings at all.

Other Women as Well

It must not be overlooked that the halo given to your merchandise, in the advertising of the goods for weddings, will only add zest and interest to them, in the minds of the general readers. The woman who merely wants a suit or dress for usual wear will feel that it is all the more desirable for her use, because it has been suggested for the bride. The same is true of the muslin underwear, corsets, blouses, millinery, stockings, and the like. The advertising of linens for the bride will get added attention from the housekeeper of many years' standing, who wants new linens for her own home.

Whether you hold your White Sales of lingerie and linens in May, or are going to hold them in June, you can play up the June bride to tremendous advantage in your advertising, in your window displays, and in the departments, thus adding a forceful display feature that will be impressive to your public, whether people want to buy the goods for weddings, or for their own uses. The vital thing in this advertising, as in most advertising, is to *create the largest possible interest in the goods*, on its OWN MERITS, before you begin to talk about price. If June weddings will do this for lingerie and linens, play them up to the limit. If writing about the DELIGHTFUL QUALITIES of the goods or garments will do it—do that. If writing about the scarcity on the market, and the likelihood of supplies falling short—do that, provided, of course, that *such are the facts*.

Use thought, intelligent imagination, and aggressive common sense, always remembering that every day has its own special appeal, IF YOU OPEN YOUR MIND to look for it. The most vital thing is not to let "daily routine" *put blinders on your eyes and keep you in the old rut*.

XXXI

PLAN FOR A "WHAT YOU WANT" SALE

"Something New"

The usual "sale" is made up of goods that the merchant wants to *sell*. It is rather unique for a sale to be made up of goods the people want to *buy*! Of course, there have always been stores that held discount sales at times when a discount was allowed on any purchase made during the sale period. It is also true, and we have been quoting it ever since Solomon first said it, that "There is nothing new under the sun." Someone has also told us that there never were and never can be more than three jokes; but thank goodness, men are able to find millions of ways of telling them, in order to get new laughs. So it is in merchandising and advertising. We can't get a new heaven and a new earth every morning; but we must use our brains to discover continuously new ways to show our goods, and NEW ways to DRESS UP OUR ADVERTISING. Thus we keep the public interested, and make our storekeeping newly attractive all the time.

The Customer's Own Sale

The psychology of advertising is largely a matter of *using the right words* to make the strongest impression possible on the reader's mind. It is not always WHAT you say, but it is HOW YOU SAY IT, that counts. So I am going to suggest that instead of advertising some such counting-room statement as "Discount Day Tomorrow," you turn the minds of your public right about from the price matter to something that will have a much stronger appeal. I should write the story this way:

A Stirring February Sale Begins Tomorrow

Composed NOT of Goods that We Want to Sell; but
Exactly the Goods that

YOU WANT TO BUY!

Right through the month of January, we reduced and advertised the goods that we wanted to sell, and most of them have been sold. Now we still have a few weeks, likely to be dull for us, before the Spring selling begins, and in order to gain your interest and to MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE TO INVEST IN OUR GOODS NOW, we are going to look at store-keeping FROM YOUR POINT OF VIEW.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BUY?

We might GUESS, and be right as to the desires of many people; but we want to completely meet the requirements of EVERY INDIVIDUAL IN OUR CITY, and so we put into the Sale that begins tomorrow

1. Every piece of goods in our store stocks—and besides—
2. We will specially order for you any goods we do not have, which belong to our regular lines.

And, whether the goods that you want are from our own stocks, or are specially ordered for you,

YOU SAVE AT LEAST 10% on the Price

- In Some Departments the Saving will be 12½%
- In Some Departments the Saving will be 15%
- In Other Departments it may be 20 or 25%
- Many Goods Show Savings Up to 50%

So This Is YOUR SALE—

You say what goods you want reduced; we provide them.

This would be an important event at any time; but it is particularly extraordinary now, when so many lines of goods have advanced in price, and are still going higher rapidly. Anticipating your requirements would be large economy, under any circumstances; but this sale makes it DOUBLY WORTH YOUR WHILE TO BUY NOW.

The Sale Lasts for THIS WEEK ONLY!

Tell us what you want in it TODAY. Here are some of the specials that show the largest savings for the week:

.....
.....
.....

The Way You Put It Counts

This kind of an announcement has the tendency to make people value it in an unusual degree. It takes their point of view. It calls it "*their* Sale," and justifies the statement. It doesn't generalize by saying 10 per cent discount on everything in stock; but it says

"10% SAVING ON THE GOODS YOU SELECT"

which is very different in its effect on the reader's mind, even if it does mean the same thing in fact.

After all, people are not going to be made to buy your goods because of your creating new and spectacular methods of merchandising, and keeping your business upset all the time. They are going to buy more goods, or buy from you instead of from your competitor, because you are able to strongly *arouse their interest*. Thus the presentation of your story is of vital importance, and originality of statement is as valuable a factor as can be applied to both advertising and display of merchandise, always provided, of course, that you have a good, sound merchandise basis for your advertising story. Mere words cannot build a successful business—though they rarely fail to fool the public for a time. But the right words, cleverly expressed, will help tremendously in promoting and building up a business that is sound and worthy.

Once a Year

It is rarely good business to cut the prices of all goods in a store, and I should not recommend that it be done often, for it leaves no chance to make up for reduction losses by selling regular goods. But after running a January Clearance Sale for several weeks, and still having many dull weeks to overcome, you need a novelty, perhaps, to maintain public interest and this plan can be used FOR ONE WEEK ONLY to make some friends and to make some talk for your store. But I shouldn't do the same thing again for a whole year.

XXXII

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SPRING MILLINERY "OPENING"

The Value of Originality

The new millinery always brings radical changes, and invariably lends itself to many varieties of artistic display. Yet, millinery departments seem to look much the same, year after year. Millinery windows show no radical departures, and the millinery exhibition is usually only a slight variation in the matter of decorations. No matter how original the styles may be, the milliner rarely gets credit for her art and ingenuity from any but a very few of the most discerning women. Hence we must contrive some artificial means of arousing public comment about the new hats and the new styles, if we can discover some striking methods of displaying the hats and arranging the millinery department. For the millinery department, aside from the display cases, I suggest the following plan.

Millinery "Flowers"

We advertising writers have often spoken of the new hats as being exquisite "flowers." Now, suppose we treat them in that exact manner. The best millinery shops in America and abroad have always shown individual hats on tall stands, perhaps four to five feet high. Suppose, instead of using stiff, rigid stands, we make our "flower stalks" of steel rods, or stiff wires, that will sway like the stalk of golden glow, cosmos or sunflowers, if you like. These rods may then be covered with Dennison paper, to imitate the real plant, with branches

and leaves. Then, at the top, as the crowning flower, will be placed the millinery "creation" that is to be exhibited.

The "millinery stalks" may be arranged in rows, according to the space that is available. Perhaps two rows of stalks on each side of the path where the customers walk to view them; and as many paths as space and quantity of hats may suggest. In fact, where stocks are small, or space limited, a single row of the millinery stalks, along the side of the showroom, will prove very attractive and artistic, if skilfully arranged. The decorator will of course use his art to make the entire setting artistic as well as realistic. The ground at the roots of the stalks will be covered with moss, perhaps; and artificial morning glories may be climbing up the stalks, as they would be in any garden. They will add to the realism, while they will also relieve the plain effect of the bare stalks. The top of each stalk will be so finished that the hat may be as easily removed and replaced as if the stalk were an ordinary display rack. And the rods will be sufficiently durable to last throughout the season, if it is so desired.

Plan the Background

For millinery "Opening Day," I suggest the following setting. When you have living models to wear the hats, arrange a walk at one end of the show-room where the models may parade, and build between this walk and the space where the customers will be seated or standing a WALL, just high enough to hide all but the head and neck of the model. Have this wall painted to look like brick or stone, and have it covered with trailing vines, honeysuckle, or roses in bloom, to give the effect of the customers being in a beautiful garden, looking over the wall, at the beautiful new hats going by. The effect could be intensified, in stores that have space to show the painting of a church in the near distance. Thus the promenaders would be imagined as going to church Easter morning.

It will be found that a very unique effect is produced by permitting only the heads of the models to be seen. This will also intensify the interest in the hats. Stores that do not have living models may create exactly the same effect in a still picture, by building the wall in the same manner, and using display heads that will rest on a table that is cut off by the wall, in the same position as for the living models. This arrangement will require only a few feet at the end of the room. Its effectiveness will depend upon the taste with which the wall is decorated and arranged.

This same effect may be produced for use in the window. The foreground might show several figures seated on benches inside the garden, in which case there should be liberal arrangements of real or artificial flowers, to make a real garden setting. The bottom of the window would naturally be covered with artificial grass, and there might also be tennis rackets and croquet mallets and balls lying around.

The Models—Immaculate Daintiness

One of the most important features about selling millinery is the DRESSING of the HAIR of the SALESWOMEN. It seems the most obvious thing in the world that saleswomen, who have to be asked constantly to try on the hats that are being shown to customers, should look their best, and should be immaculately clean and dainty. Yet HOW RARELY is this the case. In the fine shops in New York, the dressing of the girl's hair in the latest style is the most important function of the getting ready for the day's business, but in many of the department stores the matter is sadly neglected. A \$50 hat looks dowdy on a frowsy, ill-kept head, but a \$5 hat when shown on the neat and well-dressed coiffure of a clean, smart saleswoman, looks smart and tasteful.

Moreover, this CLEANLINESS has a much broader significance for the woman who is going to buy and wear the hat.

There is an inevitable feeling that a hat is not sanitary after it has been held on a frowsy head, during the time of purchase inspection. When the thought of such contamination is once started, the customer inevitably begins to wonder how many other frowsy heads the hat has been tried on, and she may lose her appetite for new millinery. The clean, dainty, well coifed head of a smart saleswoman never starts such thoughts.

The Instinct for Becomingness

In choosing saleswomen to sell millinery, the chief quality to be secured is ability to tell when a hat is becoming to the customer. This is an instinct. It must be naturally possessed. It can't be taught or hammered into the girl. But if it is not possessed, the customer may be almost tormented to death by having unbecoming hats tried on her head, and she may never be shown the styles that would be most charming for her to wear.

It is a perfect delight for a woman to be able to go to a milliner who may be completely trusted to sell her only the most becoming millinery. Correct lines, suited to that particular individual, are infinitely more important to the artistic effect of the hat than expensive materials, and right colors are absolutely vital. What a pity to place such a responsibility on a poor girl who has no qualifications for this important work!

XXXIII

A JULY "DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE" SALE

Getting Summer Trade

July is considered the poorest merchandising month of the whole year. Most merchants confine their attention to seeing how low they can keep the expense bills for that month. The least possible amount of advertising is done. The salary list is cut to the smallest limits that will maintain an organization to keep the store going. Merchandise is sold out to the last dollar. Thousands of stores are very indifferent as to whether they have in stock goods which customers may call for, or not. Their one great aim and object is to get the smallest figures possible for inventory time.

Of course, there is great wisdom in practically all of these policies, but if carried to an extreme they are not only dangerous to the prestige of the store, but lead to the definite loss of sales and profits that might be reaped in the month of July, if more effort were made to do business and a little less to drive customers away from the store. It would be considered very bad policy to put up a sign on your front door and say "Store Closed until August 15th"; but a great many merchants are doing things that are far more damaging to their future business, than closing the store would be. In fact closing the doors of a store completely for a month or six weeks might be looked upon as an innovation, and, if the proper announcement were made, a tremendous number of people would be thinking up things to buy when the doors should open once more on August 15th.

Sales Possibilities—Staple Goods

Many merchants have discovered that very large and gratifying sales may be made in very unexpected quarters by clever merchandising during the month of July. There are many hot-weather necessities in the way of clothing and housekeeping comforts, that are readily sold at small expense if the proper stocks are kept and if the merchandise is properly advertised. There are hundreds of little articles that people need in the summer time, but which are sold ordinarily by the Five and Ten Cent stores. There is no reason why the department store should not get the most of this business, if the merchant went after it right. It is impossible for me to give here a catalog of the things that could be sold. I can simply point the way so that the merchant himself may study the market to find things that he could sell by the hundreds and perhaps thousands, if they were intelligently advertised and attractively shown in the store.

It is most important that the merchant should make up his mind not to be out of the goods that people have a right to demand in July. This does not mean a big investment of money, but it does mean very intelligent examination of the lines in all departments, to be sure that sizes are not missing in thin underwear and hosiery; to be sure that there is a complete stock of popular priced towels; to have the staple patterns in cotton goods, which people will be sure to want; and to have all sizes in low shoes, so that people do not have to go to your competitor, or to another city to get their shoes. Continue this examination through the whole store and you will find that while the necessary purchases will not amount to a very great volume, you can reap a nice profit, and accommodate hundreds of customers by having the right things.

Cooling Refreshments

You should make especially attractive your candy department and soda fountain, if you have them. A store that has

a cool corner where it serves ice cream and cool drinks will always be an attraction in any city. There is no reason why the drug stores should be permitted to enjoy this continuous summer trade, which might bring people into *your* store.

Naturally July is the month to clean up stocks and to sell out all merchandise that is not to be carried over. There is a splendid opportunity to start right out with the opening day of the month, or the day after the Fourth of July, with the July Clearance Sale. Every merchant knows what he should do in the way of cutting prices on goods that must be sold. If buying has been badly done and the goods are left over, there is nothing to do but to get what money you can out of them, and get them out of the store, so that there is no out-of-date merchandise to be mixed with the new goods in the fall.

The "Declaration" Sale

Many years ago, I made up a very unusual and timely advertising heading, which I have never seen improved in recent years for getting public attention.

It was a "DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE" SALE.

It carried out the spirit of the Fourth of July and got the interested attention of practically every reader of the newspaper. The heading of the advertisement was partly a paraphrase of the original Declaration of Independence. A cardboard proclamation was attractively lettered for exhibition in the window, and got tremendous public attention. It was finished at the bottom with a big red seal and signed with the firm name. It had a very spectacular appearance.

Of course, it is very logical to say that in cleaning up stocks for the final inventory, it was necessary to take liberties with every price and to forget the cost because of odd lots to be sold out during this "Independence Sale." Following is an outline of the copy to be used in introducing this sale. It will help you to decide whether you want to adopt the idea.

OUR DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE!

IT WON'T cost us our heads; it won't compel us to shoulder blunderbusses and pick-handles and fight for liberty; it won't cut the galling apron strings of an ambitious nation and start it on the road to freedom and glory, and make another anniversary day for the Boom—Crack—Flash and Glare of Fireworks; but

IT WILL cost us thousands of dollars in cut-price losses; it will compel us to shoulder the great loss at present, and march forward with our faces set hopefully toward the future freedom from old stock. It will trim down many weights that clog our progress and give us free limbs and light hearts for the coming season's business; and it will save you the money to celebrate the grand old "Fourth" in a manner worthy of its Glorious Origin and leave you a good margin besides.

THE DECLARATION

With Apologies to Thomas Jefferson.

"When in the course of human events it becomes necessary" for a Dry Goods House to dissolve the business economy bands which bind them to a close consideration of cost prices, and assume among the beneficial organizations of the earth a position which the general public may doubt, because they do not understand; a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to such a drastic separation from profits.

"We hold these truths to be self-evident."

Dry Goods must not be carried from season to season.

All stocks must be low for inventory.

It is better to stand a small loss now than a greater one later on.

Goods cannot be sold at this season at paying prices, hence it is necessary for us to sacrifice them.

Believing the above, you must see your opportunity; and how greatly you will benefit yourself by assisting us in our struggle.

"We, therefore," the DRY GOODS HOUSE of , "do publish and declare that we are absolved from all allegiance" to, and consideration of, the before mentioned Cost and Profits, and declare ourselves "free and independent" to mark goods as low as we see fit during our great "Independence Sale" of this month.

Independent Prices on Dress Goods....

Independent Prices on Linens....

Independent Prices on Wash Goods....

Independent Prices on Underwear....

Independent Prices on Domestic....

Independent Prices on Basement Goods....

Our INDEPENDENT PRICES will make the jingle of Independent dimes and dollars in our Customers' Pocket Books. Watch our

"INDEPENDENCE SALE"

All This Month

XXXIV

PLAN FOR THE FAMOUS "SUGAR-PLUM" HOSPITALITY SALE

"A Whirlwind!"

The "Sugar-Plum" Sale is one of the most successful store features that I ever originated. One merchant who used the plan expressed his opinion thus: "To say that the Sugar-Plum Sale was a success is not enough. It was a WHIRLWIND." This event must never be made common in a store, or it would lose its power. It was planned to create live business during the dulllest period of the year, or for a new concern that wanted to command broad and intense public interest.

A Big Idea "Up Your Sleeve"

The forward-looking merchant does not rest on his oars when business is coming well. He is constantly looking forward to the period when sales must be expected to fall off and making plans to secure the largest possible volume of business, as well as to keep his store before his public. It is a great thing when in such mood to have "up your sleeve" a plan upon which you can positively depend to make SMASHING BIG BUSINESS when, otherwise, selling would be at its worst. This plan, while tried out and proved to be sound and resultful by a few stores, has never been generally used, and will probably be an entirely new sensation in your community.

Every really compelling event, excepting fashion exhibitions, is based upon some definite economy for the public. It must be so planned in order to command wide attention and

large response. That is the principle which justifies the "What You WANT" Sale, already described, as an extraordinary expedient for waking up your public. But generally speaking *cutting prices on a long list of regular merchandise* is a crude wasteful policy. It multiplies your losses over a wide scope of goods, and gives the store only the slightest opportunity to sell to the bargain customers other goods on which a compensating margin of profit may be made. The Sugar-Plum Sale applies this sound principle in a better way and gives the public the advantage of reduced prices *without in the least sacrificing* the store's interests.

Protects Prices in General

The remarkable strength of the trading stamp principle came from the fact that the trading stamp offers did not necessarily affect the prices of the goods in the store, although their allurements covered every article that the customer might purchase. While I hold no brief for the trading stamps, I am compelled to admire the principle which prevents a general slashing of prices throughout a store when a big sale is to be made. In the plan that I am presenting, all the prices of the merchandise throughout your store are protected. If any goods have been reduced in price, of course, they remain reduced in price for this event. But the allurements that brings people to the store does not depend upon your regular goods being cut at all, and it is the fact that you *make profits on your regular merchandise*, which makes this kind of an event valuable to promote.

Our first thought is to have an original name, so that the affair will not seem stereotyped. Our special offerings are not to be "bargains" at all. Inasmuch as they are practically given away, I have determined to call them "Sugar-Plums." While there is nothing original about this term, it is one that everybody understands, and it is rarely, if ever, used in the

dry goods business. I have added the words "Hospitality Week," because "Hospitality" is a good word and does not sound like either "Sale," or "Exhibition," but makes people think that you want them to come to the store.

This is the combination of ideas by which I arrived at the display line, which is to be in the largest type in your first advertisement, although it is not at the top:

"SUGAR-PLUM HOSPITALITY WEEK."

The introduction to the advertisement does not start out to talk "bargains," but endeavors to attract general attention and give a more interesting atmosphere to the occasion than usual and thus carries out the idea of selling all your merchandise, as well as the particular sugar-plum offerings.

The Advertising—Atmosphere First

I have attached copy for the actual advertisement of the event, to be published in the Sunday newspapers just before the sale. This will give you a pretty comprehensive idea of the plan, the idea being that one very remarkable merchandise "plum" will be provided for each day during the entire week. This plan can be a success only by using the sort of merchandise that I have announced in the advertising copy. The sale of Utica sheets gives nobody, neither your competitors, nor your customers, the opportunity to question the value of the so-called "plum." The same is true of a perfect double boiler, particularly if it happens to be aluminum. The other offerings may be similar goods of your own selection. It would be a very serious mistake to select for the offering *any merchandise* that you are eager to sell because it *has not proved attractive in regular stock*. This is too vital a proposition to hazard its success by taking such a chance and your advertising must impress the public definitely with the genuineness of the values offered.

Values That Are Definite

I have made my plan on the basis of showing an actual reduction of 25 per cent on each \$5 purchase of merchandise. You can afford to do this for this particular week for two reasons: First, because the primary object of this event is to overcome competition and dominate the business in your city or town, during the event, which can be accomplished only by a substantial reduction on the merchandise sold. In the second place, when you think of the figures, bear in mind the fact that, while your actual loss on the "sugar-plum" offerings is from \$1 to \$1.25, a great many purchasers will buy considerably more than \$5 worth of merchandise. Some may buy \$50 worth. Then hundreds will buy smaller amounts and not secure the "plums" at all.

Only One "Plum" to Each

In no case do you permit the purchase of more than one sugar-plum by one customer, no matter what the amount of the purchase may be. You protect yourself by stipulating that it must be \$5, but you also advertise the fact that no customer, no matter what the purchase, can secure more than one sugar-plum in one day and on the basis of any one purchase. Of course, it would be very bad policy to create an awkward situation in case the same customer bought \$5 worth of goods at one time, and then came back and made another purchase of \$5 or more, the second time. It ought to be the general plan to suggest that that was not the intention, even in a case of this sort, but I would not establish a rule which would make a manager disappoint a customer for this reason.

Copy for the Announcement

Pages 178 and 179 give the opening announcement, and page 180 gives the copy for the evening paper on the first day of the sale, to keep the interest jumping for the second day.

Tomorrow Morning We Inaugurate Our First "SUGAR-PLUM" HOSPITALITY WEEK

This is a new name for a new occasion, providing, if you please, a new method of making a visit to our store BOTH PLEASANT AND HIGHLY PROFITABLE FOR YOU on each individual day of the whole week.

We made up our minds long ago that the way for the owners of this business to be prosperous and happy was TO DESERVE THAT CONDITION, by providing such MERCHANDISE AND SERVICE as would make everybody who dealt with us HAPPY AND SATISFIED over the goods bought and the prices paid for them.

We are mighty proud of our friends and customers in this city, but we are determined to ADD GREATLY TO THEIR NUMBER. We have been working for many weeks to prepare this new demonstration to our public of the superlative character of the Merchandise and Service provided by this store.

First of all, we want old friends and new to see the goods in our store and test our service and our prices—and, besides, there will be a wonderfully attractive and valuable

"SUGAR-PLUM" PURCHASE for You, EVERY DAY!

Some timely, staple, or otherwise HIGHLY DESIRABLE piece of merchandise, ON THAT DAY ONLY, will be SOLD FOR A SONG to every customer who has on that day bought other goods to the amount of \$5 or more.

We shall not tell you in advance what any of the "SUGAR-PLUMS" for the other days are, but TO-MORROW'S "PLUM" has been made of such a well-known and definitely priced article that every one may fully realize WHAT A BIG, SOLID, JUICY, MONEY-SAVING "SUGAR-PLUM" goes with every purchase of \$5 or more. Here it is:

One Pair of UTICA SHEETS

Known by every housekeeper from the Atlantic to the Pacific—the most widely liked brand in America—your own selection from seven different sizes, until some sizes are all sold out—

At 19c each

**Regular Prices,
90c to \$1.15
according to size**

Not more than 2 sheets (one pair) will be sold to any one customer.

This is not a "bait"—there is no hidden hook. Ours is an open and frank object—not to break your belief in the regular price of Utica Sheets, if we could, but to use an article of unquestioned worth at its regular price to impress you with the INTRINSIC VALUE of

THE "SUGAR-PLUM" THAT WE PROVIDE

as a special "perquisite" for every customer who comes and makes a substantial purchase in our Store during

OUR SUGAR-PLUM HOSPITALITY WEEK.

Besides this, we so fully GUARANTEE every article of merchandise that we sell that

WE WILL TAKE BACK ANY GOODS AS USUAL

Refunding the Money Most Cordially for any customer not entirely happy—but the Sheets must also be returned in such cases naturally.

We invite you to accept our HOSPITALITY, first, to renew your acquaintance with our store, to inspect our merchandise, and, if you find it attractive and desirable, to make your needed purchases, just as you would anyhow, because they are RIGHT and BEST, and then secure YOUR "SUGAR-PLUM!"

There will be no disappointments—no shortage, except possibly for the moment; for if our stock runs out with unexpected demands, EVERY CUSTOMER MAKING THE REQUIRED PURCHASE TOMORROW will be supplied with the wanted Utica Sheets, on Special Order, as soon as we can get them from the Mills.

The store is specially prepared for the honor of your visit.

Watch for the "SUGAR-PLUM" News, every day.

(Signature)

**Tomorrow will be the Second Day of Our Unique
 "SUGAR-PLUM" HOSPITALITY WEEK
 With a New, Fascinating Attraction for Every
 Customer**

As this advertisement is being put into type, the people of our City are showing their substantial appreciation of our "SUGAR-PLUM" Offerings by the largest store attendance that we have known this year; and many have already inquired about what our "Sugar-Plum" will be for tomorrow; but nobody could learn that eagerly awaited news until they read it here, in the newspaper.

Here is the astounding story, which almost eclipses the wonderful offering of Utica Sheets that made such a sensation today:

Tomorrow Is Aluminum DOUBLE BOILER Day!

*This
 Splendid
 Kitchen
 Utensil*

(Cut of
 Double
 Boiler)

for
 only
1 0 c !

Regular price, \$1.85

To all purchasers of goods to the value of
 \$5 or more, TODAY

(Not more than one (1) Boiler sold to one customer)

In answer to the thought in many minds, we are printing below the story of some of the extremely attractive merchandise from which regular five-dollar purchases may be selected—to show how desirable the goods would be, at their favorable prices, even if there were no "SUGAR-PLUM" offerings to DOUBLY REPAY our visitors tomorrow and all this week.

(Advertisements of other Merchandise
 to be arranged below)

Make Your Arrangements Carefully

The selection and assignment of the particular offerings should be made by the firm and one other person. Even if the goods are specially bought, it is not necessary to tell even the head of stock how they are to be used. It is VITAL, in protecting your whole plan, that your competitor should not have the least idea of what you are going to do, until it appears in the newspapers. It would be very wise to have all the newspaper proofs made without inserting either the name of the article or the price until the very last moment when the proof is to be released. All the rest of the advertisement can be set up and the name of the article filled in at the last moment.

Of course, you will provide a good stock of Utica sheets, to be ready on the day of the sale, but, as suggested in the copy for the advertisement, no matter how many more might be asked for than you have in stock, you can always supply the required quantity. If you cannot get them at once, you can make the sale, take the money, and deliver the sheets to the customer when you have secured them from your source of supply. The more sheets you sell under these conditions, the more \$5 sales you make, and the more merchandise you will sell. *And "the sky is the limit" for selling goods under such circumstances.*

XXXV

A CAMPAIGN FOR THE DRESSMAKERS' GOOD-WILL

Boosting Sales of Dress Goods

The dressmaker is a mighty important factor to the dry goods merchant. Too often she is not given the serious consideration that her importance deserves. We all know that silks, dress goods, wash goods, linings, trimmings, and notions are the BACKBONE of the dry goods business. They were, in the past; they are now, and, in my opinion, they are going to be a bigger factor than ever, in the future. Here is my reason for this belief: discriminating women are beginning to tire of the usual ready-to-wear apparel, because of its lack of variety and individuality. They are showing a desire for more individual expression of their taste, and more originality. This can be secured only by selecting their own materials, and having them made up in the style that they desire. Either manufacturers are going to find a more interesting way to appeal to these women, by new methods of style variation, or there will be an inevitable return to piece goods buying.

Help Systematize the Dressmaking Business

Dressmaking would be vastly more popular than it is today, if it were PROPERLY ORGANIZED. Women shrink from worrying with dressmakers more because of the bother of waiting for them, or of finding one that has time available, than because of the price charged. The merchant who can *help to systematize* the dressmaking business in his community, will render a big service to the women who want dresses, as well as to the dressmakers themselves.

The silk and dress goods business is going to have a NEW LEASE OF LIFE and PROSPERITY as soon as a convenient and easy way to get the goods made up is provided. This object is going to be accomplished by putting some efficiency into the dressmaking business. In this work the merchants can be of great service, and the results will be to the great advantage of the stores.

Make a Closer Alliance

I believe it is fair to estimate that half of the silks and dress goods are sold to people who go to dressmakers to have the goods made up; and in many cities, more than half of these purchases are made up by the dressmakers for their clients. So this is mighty valuable business to go after. There are various ways to attract the interest of the dressmakers. First is the question of DISCOUNT. This must be given liberal consideration. Next are the Fall Exhibitions for dressmakers, now common in most cities. They are valuable in showing dressmakers what you have, as well as in making direct sales at the time of the exhibition. But I believe that the most important thing to do, in order to increase the sales of silks and dress goods, is to BRIDGE THE GULF between the dressmakers and the women of your city. *How can they be brought together?*

The woman who wants a dress made, very frequently can't find a dressmaker to do the work. Dressmakers who have certain days to fill up, can't find the customers for that particular time.

The Dressmakers' Booking Office

The thing needed is a BOOKING OFFICE, a bureau where the woman may go to get the dressmaker she wants, and an organization that supplies work for the dressmakers. There are many good dressmakers that are mighty poor salespeople.

They shrink from asking for work. They don't know how to solicit business, and their time is going to waste, while many women are in a frenzy because they can't get their dresses made when they want them. The well organized, widely-known dressmaking establishment has plenty to do, and has a waiting list of customers all the time. But many other thoroughly good dressmakers are frequently idle, when they should be making up dresses from the GOODS that YOUR CUSTOMERS WOULD BUY, if they knew how to get the dresses made up.

If there is some good source of business, and more work is offered than the dressmaking organizations can do, if they know that a *big store is working to keep them filled up with orders* they will be glad to enlarge their organizations. Then women generally will be mighty glad to have more dresses made to order, when they find that they can get the work done more quickly and more efficiently than by old-fashioned methods.

One thing will help the other, and as the dressmaking business prospers the SALES of silks, dress goods, and trimmings WILL INCREASE. This is a business that the *specialty stores can never take away* from you. That is something worth serious thought.

Diplomacy Will Aid All Concerned

Now, what is the first step toward organizing a dressmakers' service for the convenience of your customers? I should open, in my dress goods department, a

"DRESSMAKERS EXCHANGE"

The manager of the exchange should visit every dressmaker in your community, and arrange a basis upon which he could take orders from the store's customers for dresses and suits to be made by that dressmaker. He should secure a schedule

of rates for various kinds of work, so that he could make as accurate an estimate as the dressmaker herself. He should also arrange a plan for scheduling the time when the work could be done, either by telephoning each time that he had a customer, or by having the dressmaker indicate what time was open, and then send a memorandum every time that certain dates were taken—so that they could be checked off from the record kept by the store. A similar record of orders taken by the store should be immediately sent to the dressmaker.

The store's record should show a complete "List of the Dressmakers Operating their own Shops," with their rates for various kinds of work; also a "List of Dressmakers Who Will Sew in the Customer's Home," with rates charged by the day, and a record of days open for engagement.

How to Exploit the Bureau

The existence of this bureau, after the listing is complete, should be **WIDELY ADVERTISED** to the public. It should be widely exploited that the securing of a good dressmaker is now an easy matter, and that the store will attend to all the details. Then I should prepare a large **BULLETIN**, containing all the names of the dressmakers listed in the bureau, printed alphabetically, with their addresses. This bulletin should be posted up in the dress goods department, to please the dressmakers and to inform the store's customers, and to give continuous publicity to the fact that we had *made it very easy and convenient* for our customers to get a dressmaker at any time that the customer wanted a dress made. At the bottom of the bulletin would be the statement: "Reservations made here for the services of any of the above dressmakers." This would create large interest in your store on the part of the dressmakers. All would want to be listed, either at the start, or very soon after people began talking about your innovation.

This interest would unquestionably lead to largely in-

creased business from the dressmakers, unless you did not have the goods wanted, or were not treating them properly otherwise.

Busy Dressmakers Make Busy Dress Goods Counters

This whole plan should be put into operation immediately. The manager of the bureau should be appointed. He should start out at once to interview and list the dressmakers and secure their rates. It may require some tact to get the thing started, but the dressmakers will soon see the importance of a flat rate, and many may be mighty glad of the chance to get enough business to make a flat rate of charges. Of course, there will be details to work out, which cannot be anticipated here, but the campaign can be started now. Secure the friendly interest of the dressmakers and create a factor to *increase the sales of silks and dress goods* for your store.

XXXVI

ESTABLISH A HOME-DRESSMAKING BUREAU

To Boost Piece Goods

As a valuable aid to women who do their own dressmaking, and to foster the sale of goods by the yard, the following plan is suggested. In May or June when graduation frocks are to be made for girl graduates, is a good time to establish a very powerful selling aid for your piece goods departments. It is the custom nowadays for girls to make their own graduation dresses, and, of course, hundreds of mothers in your community are also thinking about the gowns that their daughters will wear on that important occasion. Naturally hundreds of other women are thinking about the cool summer dresses. Only a few women take the matter of home-dressmaking easily. To most of them it is a very large problem. It is puzzling in the matter of materials, as well as in the selection of styles that will be becoming.

Women Would Patronize Such a Bureau

There are two points of strength that will be developed by the adoption of the Dressmaking-Aid Bureau. In the first place, if women knew that such service were available without cost and that they would be guided and helped in every part of the work of making the new dresses, hundreds of additional sales would be made in the piece goods departments. In the second place, the store which had an efficient Dressmaking-Aid Bureau would attract a large share of business from women who had already decided to make their own dresses.

Safe and Easy Dressmaking

Now what is the particular help that women want in the matter of dressmaking, and how can it be provided for them in the fullest possible degree? The first help of all would be the free services of a recognized expert in dressmaking, to whom a woman could go as freely as she would to her neighbor and yet know that she would be given information that her neighbor could not possess: first, in reference to styles; second, fabrics; third, the selection of the styles and fabrics that would be becoming to the person who is to wear the gown, and also weaves and patterns that would be most effective in the styles selected. The expert should be competent to give advice in reference to the colors that should be used by the wearer. If ready-made paper patterns are to be used, the proper pattern could be selected in conference. Then the expert or one of her assistants should give detailed advice in reference to the making of the dress, how to lay the pattern on the goods in cutting it, suggestions as to the most efficient method of using the sewing machine, and just what attachments to use for each purpose.

Daily Advice

Then there should be advice in reference to trimmings and other details of finish. There should be provided the opportunity for the home-dressmaker to bring the dress at any point of its construction to the Dressmaking-Aid Bureau and receive further advice and help. The customers should be free to run to the bureau at any time with any trimmings, ribbons, or other suggestions for additions to the gown, to secure the opinion of the expert as to the advisability of their use, or her judgment of what should be used for any purpose in connection with the gown. Altogether the bureau should be a place of genuine service to the customers of the store.

Such a bureau would need to be exploited continuously,

just as stores have exploited their free millinery trimming department. If stores have discovered that it pays them to do the trimming of hats without charge, and pay for it out of the profits on the millinery trimmings certainly it will be found profitable to give this extra service to customers who buy dressmaking materials of various kinds.

Today, when it is feared that the sale of fabrics by the yard is a diminishing business, the merchant should do everything he can to dissipate the idea that it is a hard proposition to make a dress at home. The ease with which ready-made apparel can be purchased has almost destroyed the ambition of women to make their garments at home, and yet remarkable as has been the improvement of ready-made garments during recent years, every tasteful woman today has the desire to have individually made dresses; first, because the possibilities of variety in the matter of style are so greatly increased, and second, because the range of choice when goods are selected by the yard is a hundred times as broad as in ready-made garments. Thousands of women would be glad to buy the materials and make their garments, if they could be helped just a little in the matter of making them. A great many fear that they will merely destroy the materials, if they buy them. Others, because they do not know the best way of cutting and sewing, work ten times harder than is necessary to make up the dresses.

The Organization

A thoroughly organized bureau would mean having one competent dressmaker, with good taste and good judgment, with courtesy and tact, and an unlimited amount of patience, head the organization. She should have, as assistants, young women who have learned something about dressmaking and who also have tact and good taste; who are competent to advise customers on most points in reference to dressmaking

and dress selection, referring the more important matters to the head of the bureau when her personal services are required. A very large additional business can be secured by exploiting such a bureau and offering its services to the young girls who are making their own graduation gowns. Very large additional advertising value can be secured immediately by offering the services of the bureau to women who are ready to make summer gowns in their own homes.

Cutting Goods Beats Cutting Prices

The organization of a bureau of this sort will do infinitely more for the development of sales in the piece goods and trimming departments than a very large volume of bargain advertising. A woman may be tempted when she sees pretty cotton goods sold at half price, but she will not make the investment, even at the most startling reductions, if she lacks confidence in her ability to make up the dresses after the materials are bought. I believe that a 25 per cent reduction in connection with dressmaking aid, such as I have described above, will bring vastly greater sales results than a 50 per cent reduction in price, where no assistance or encouragement is given to the woman who buys the goods.

XXXVII

ON OCTOBER FIRST, FIRE YOUR BIGGEST GUNS FOR THE MAIN FALL "DRIVE"

A Time for Full Profits

To be caught asleep at the post when the starter's whistle blows, is one of the easiest ways to lose part of the increased volume of business at the start of the season. It is so tempting to economize on your advertising, by waiting and saving money; but it's the height of folly to think that you can get the business *after your competitor has sold the goods* to customers that might have been yours, if you had advertised SOON ENOUGH!

The early business is the best business, because you have plenty of time and people to handle it before the big rush comes. Goods sold early *always carry full profits!* Don't make the foolish mistake of saving your big advertising money to spend on your "reduction sales" later on. Spend your big money in advertising NEW GOODS AT FULL PROFITS.

Right at the season's start people are always ready to do large buying of new goods. Some have made up their minds to buy certain things, but hundreds are just waiting for you to make up their minds for them. They are receptive to the suggestion. You must wake them up and stimulate their desire for the fine new things that you tell about in your advertising. Then is the time to tell people about your new dress goods and silks in a big and thorough manner. Tell them how lucky they are to be able to choose from such a rich assortment of tissues and colorings, when raw materials and dyes have been so hard to get. Help them either to find the

right dressmaker, or to do the work in their own homes. Do what you can to help make it easier to get the dress fabrics made up, for that is the easy way to the selling of more dress fabrics, trimmings, and linings.

The New Fashion

Right at the season's start is the time to play up your ready-to-wear garments as if they were the only show in your town. Remember that there is nothing in the world that is more interesting to women than the NEW FASHIONS. They are eager to read every word and to see every new garment. Nothing can bring them into your store quite so quickly as the announcement that you have just received a NEW COLLECTION OF FALL SUITS from New York. The more frequently you receive such absolutely new shipments, the more interesting your store will be to them and the more closely they will watch your advertising for the news.

Remember that you are *going into battle*. Right in front of you is the trench filled with BIG SALES and you must win. Your competitors are trying to hold it away from you. You must FIGHT for it. It is worth fighting for. But you have got to use a lot of ammunition. You know how they carry a trench in Europe. The Germans started it and now the French and English are doing it even more aggressively. First, they hammer the trench for days with tons of shells. Then they are ready for their forward drive. Exactly the same principle must be followed to win the largest success in retailing. The public must be hammered with BIG CONTINUOUS ADVERTISING for days and weeks before you can expect to win their business.

Merits, Not Price

America, in practically every part, is richer now than ever before in our history. Business should be limited only by the

selling and advertising efforts made by American retailers. Are you going to let the automobile manufacturers take all the big money and the tobacco manufacturers take all the nickels, simply because they are willing to GAMBLE BIG on making the public's mouth water for their goods?

The automobile manufacturer doesn't advertise \$2,000 cars now at \$1,090—not on your life. He's not such a ninny. The cigarette manufacturer doesn't advertise a 10c pack for a nickel. That would never sell automobiles by the million, or cigarettes by the hundred billion!

They advertise their merits—*what they will do for you!*

The merchant who cuts out this drivel and fake from his advertising, and who prints copy that makes *women just crazy* to possess the new garments and the new fabrics, always gets the business that is biggest in volume, and biggest in profits in his city. Right now your store is filled with splendid goods that the people of your city want. But why should the people be interested in them *while you fail to show any enthusiasm* about them *in your advertising*. Right at this minute your advertising should be so filled with enthusiasm about the goods and your eagerness for everybody to *see these things* of which you are so proud, that your store would be crowded with men and women who want new things and have been waiting for just that kind of news.

A Store to Be Proud of

This is the *biggest fact in advertising*: People size up your goods and your store largely by your own estimate of them as it is expressed by the size and the tone of your advertising. If you don't enthuse about them, *why should the public?* If you think there is nothing under the sun worth talking about but "reduced prices," why shouldn't the public think that your store is only a "junk shop," for goods that are not quite perfect?

Give your fine goods a chance right now!

Get the writer of your advertising so filled with enthusiasm about them that he will bubble over. Then, for goodness' sake *don't kill his enthusiasm* by boiling down his story in a mean little space. Don't be a PIKER now! If you are advertising silks, make the people of your city feel that you have the ONLY REAL SILK STORE in the city. Do it by honestly, intelligently, and enthusiastically telling the wonderful story of the silks, and then *drive the impression home* by using big space for the advertisement.

This is the vital moment to fire your big guns.

Don't exploit your own weakness and littleness by pinching off a few dollars of paltry saving at this time when so many people are just waiting to be impelled to buy their fall goods from you. If you are doubtful about your goods and your store and have nothing worth talking about, you are justified in keeping quiet and picking up such small change as accident sends you. But if there is anything that you are sure of and proud of *now is the time* to get up on your hind legs and *say something*, in a loud and cheerful tone of voice.

Hit Hard Now

Then, remember, after you have done enthusiastic advertising, be sure that there is enthusiasm about the goods in the minds and the conversation of the salespeople. Do not forget that every hour, in hundreds of stores, indifferent and uninstructed salespeople are *killing the effects of good advertising* by their lackadaisical talk and their laziness in showing the goods to the customers who have come to see what has been so enthusiastically advertised. The sixty days after October First are the biggest harvest time of the whole twelve months. Don't let any one of them slip by without firing at least ONE BIG GUN. *You've got to get the business now!*

XXXVIII

THANKSGIVING DAY AS A SALES STIMULUS

A Time to Sell Fine Things

In all promotion work it is a powerful advantage to have an "occasion" to use and a reason to advance for the immediate purchase of the goods shown or advertised. A festival, such as Thanksgiving Day, provides an event to urge people to buy your FINE THINGS. Bargains may be made alluring at any time, but just before a great national holiday, it is easy to make people desire the finest goods in your store, if the right story is told about them.

November is the second or third largest month of the year, in volume of sales, always, so that it will bring big returns for all the promotion that is done. The LIVE store will have many special offerings to present, and only the short-sighted merchant will fail to show and advertise his FINE NEW GOODS, in the broadest possible manner throughout the month. Thanksgiving Day gives tremendous impetus to the selling of fine things.

Take linens as an example. The merchant will be amazed to find how great the response will be to an advertisement of REALLY FINE LINENS, the best qualities he has in stock. A skilful announcement will appeal to the imagination of housekeepers and make them look over their supplies of linens to see whether they are really worthy of the Thanksgiving dinner.

The Appeal of Elegance

It would be a very great mistake to write an advertisement of this sort and then announce a Sale of Linens following it.

LUXURIOUS TABLE LINENS

That Will Worthily Grace the Thanksgiving Table

The President has proclaimed the National Thanksgiving Feast Day. This will be one of the most notable Thanksgiving Anniversaries in American history.

The thoughtful housekeeper is already thinking about the Turkey. Soon she will provide for the Mince and Pumpkin Pies. She will have the potatoes mashed and beaten to a foam, as a delicious vehicle for the rich brown gravy—for the "Thanksgiving Dinner" is the pride of her whole year—and perhaps members of the family are to COME HOME for the feast.

But, are the table cloth and napkins provided?

Is the large Banquet Cloth big enough? Is it rich, lustrous, satiny, to give a gleaming radiance to the festal board?

The whole FINISH of the sumptuous Dinner depends on the table settings, and the Table Cloth and Napkins are most important of all.

These Rich, Sumptuous Linens Will Double the Housekeeper's Pride

Absolutely pure flax, of heavy, luxurious quality; in exquisite new patterns, yet quite moderately priced:

(List of items to follow here)

.....

If you are anxious to have a Linen Sale, and it would be very good tactics to have a Linen Sale before Thanksgiving, I would recommend that it be a week after the "Fine Announcement" is made, for two reasons: First, because the advertisement of the very finest linens in your store will directly sell very gratifying quantities of your best stock. It will also give you an opportunity to let people know that you have really fine linens in stock. Probably you have never advertised them before and have never told people that you have them. Perhaps you have table sets in boxes, carefully wrapped up and hidden on the shelves, that have never seen the light of day, because the salespeople were afraid that they would soil them. They invariably assume that each customer who comes to the counter would not want to pay the price to buy them.

"Hiding Under a Bushel"

That is the history of "finest things" in most stores. The buyer and the salespeople become obsessed with the idea that the goods are so fine and beautiful, and also so perishable, that they must be wrapped up tightly and kept in a drawer, or some other safe place, until the millionaire customers come to the counters. Millionaire customers never wear badges and customers very rarely come and say, "I want the finest thing you have in stock." So the "finest thing" is never shown. I am sure that in hundreds of stores there are fine table linens that have been hidden away for years, until they have become yellow with age, and have not been seen by a half-dozen customers since they came into the store.

Show Days for Fine Things

Take this Thanksgiving Day opportunity to bring out the most beautiful linens you have in stock. Show them in glass cases, or in the windows, or at least place them on your counters, so that people can see them. And while these

precious, expensive, and seemingly perishable, pure white linens are on display, *don't neglect the opportunity to let people know*, through your newspaper advertising, that you have these fine linens intended for Thanksgiving tables, and invite them to come in and see them while they are on display; because even with the greatest precautions that may be taken, you may depend upon it that they will quickly go back into hiding and never be seen again until another earthquake brings them to the surface.

There are good merchants all over the country who wonder why people in their communities don't buy fine goods from them. They are sure that they have just as fine goods as the New York stores, but nobody else knows it. And so when people from their city visit the larger cities, particularly Chicago and New York, they are overcome with the beauty of the fine goods they see and make their purchases because they have never seen such goods in their home stores. It is only the merchant's fault that the customer buys in big cities the fine things which he has hidden away in his store, but has never shown.

Making a Reputation

After giving a week to the display of the fine linens and letting the people of your city realize what fine linens you have, it will be very good merchandising to come out with another announcement of more moderately priced linens. The advertising of the fine linens will only add prestige to all the linens all the way down the line. It will have given people an idea that you have a high-class linen store and that all your linens are of good character and in desirable patterns. Even if you didn't sell a yard of the fine linens advertised, it would be good storekeeping to tell about them in the newspapers, because it all helps to build up good-will and a better public opinion of your store.

But the linen department is only one. There are many others that have special opportunities. Blankets and bedspreads should be advertised in the same way. You should advertise the finest grades you have in stock, and they should be exhibited prominently in the store. You should appeal particularly to the people who are expecting married sons and daughters to come back home on that day, and to those who are going to entertain friends and relatives, when every housekeeper is anxious to have the beds and bedrooms dressed up in the finest possible manner, because she is proud of her home.

The Store an Exhibition

Don't let people go off to other cities to buy the fine things that they will be glad to buy from you, if you let them know that you have them in stock. Tell about them in your advertising, and display them liberally and attractively in your store. Lace curtains and other draperies provide the same opportunity for sales of very fine goods. Carpets and rugs will also be sold under the Thanksgiving Day stimulus. You will probably see other merchandise in your store that may be advertised in the same manner.

Wearing Apparel Too

After you have given special consideration to the merchandise for the home, you still have left the biggest volume of sales for November among the ready-to-wear departments. While the season itself is sufficient incentive for the sale of women's, misses', and children's suits and coats, there is the added stimulus of the holiday which is coming, to impel people to buy somewhat finer goods than they might buy if this thought were not in their minds.

Remember that ADVERTISING has a marvelous influence on the things that people buy. It is the suggestion that is continuously made, which guides people in their selection of

goods. If you say all your best things about cheap merchandise, you lead people to think that it is not necessary to pay anything more for garments, in order to have the best. But if you advertise your moderately priced goods in the proper way, and alternate this advertising with the advertising of your finer goods, you do not permit people to rest in the belief that the cheaper articles are "good enough." And if, before Thanksgiving Day, you especially impress people with the fact that their neighbors and all well-dressed people are going to wear the finer and better things, you will put a new idea in their minds and thus be able to influence them to buy better merchandise.

Feature Your Best Goods

It is the continuous boosting of cheap goods in department store advertising that keeps people from buying finer goods, because they come to feel that if stores are continuously advertising cheap goods, that is what other people are buying, hence they must be the right things. Bargains are of the greatest possible value in their own place, but to be continuously advertising them is to use up prospects who might otherwise buy your better goods. For this reason it is of the utmost importance that during the month of November, and particularly before Thanksgiving Day, you should seize the opportunity to advertise, in the most enthusiastic manner, your **FINEST** and **HIGHEST PRICED** merchandise, for it must be sold at this time if you are to get your profit out of it. It may be sold at a loss later on, if it is not advertised and if the people of your vicinity do not know that you have these fine goods.

Consider every day between November first and Thanksgiving Day as of the highest possible value for the **SALE OF YOUR FINE GOODS**, and give them the biggest opportunity possible, in your advertising, in your store windows, in your display cases, and on your counters.

XXXIX

A CHRISTMAS FEATURE TO BOOST SALES FOR THE FANCY GOODS DEPARTMENT

Make Little Things Count

So much of the executive's time is required for the daily planning of schemes for the big departments that most merchants have little left for the smaller stocks, where sales units are small, and the total volume is seldom great. But we must not overlook the fact that small wares and little things may have a lot more to do with the success of the business than the figures of sales and profits would indicate. Watchful merchants are constantly discovering that many a customer is more impressed with the quality of the store's service and stocks, from the interest aroused by some seemingly unimportant purchase, than when a far more costly article is bought.

A wise and energetic merchant is always trying to *make the store interesting and helpful* by suggesting things which might not come to the customer's mind, but which will add to her comfort or pleasure, when the suggestion is accepted and the goods bought. This is the reason why I consider the suggestion that I am going to make below, well worthy of considerable thought and effort, during the month of December.

"Little Jack Horner"

Some thoughtful mothers have been following this plan for many years, and many homes would suffer from a dark cloud on Christmas Day if the feature were forgotten. That is why I consider it mighty good business for every store to try to make this old Christmas custom practically universal. It would seem easy to do. The following suggests the idea:

Give Us Your Order TODAY for the

JOLLY "JACK HORNER" PIE

For the Center of the Christmas Dinner Table

What a thrill of curiosity fills the mind of every member of the family (Except Mother—and she KNOWS) when they sit down to the Christmas Dinner and see the little green or pink ribbons running to each plate from the treasure-laden Jack Horner Pie. What a temptation to **PULL THE RIBBON RIGHT AWAY**. But we must not do that!

Will Father get a fountain pen or a tube of shaving cream?

Will little Dick get a whistle or a jumping jack?

Will big sister get a pair of gloves or a little Jap doll?

For there's a **SURPRISE** for everyone!

Pity the dull Dinner where the Jack Horner Pie is forgotten. Might as well do without the Christmas Tree as the Jack Horner Pie.

Maybe you think it's a lot of bother to make it—**WE DON'T!** We have little ones and **GREAT BIG ONES!** Mostly we make the big ones to order, and you've no idea what a splendid ornament they are for the center of the Christmas Table. Then there are simpler ones for people who like to have the Jack Horner Pie on the Breakfast Table. Little Willie thinks they ought to be on the table for breakfast and dinner—**BOTH!**

The prices of the Jack Horner Pies range from 50c to \$10—without the surprises. They will be from 5c each for little toys, or “crackers” with fancy caps in them, up to whatever you wish to select.

Little Comic Toys, 5c to 50c each.

Then we suggest for Father: Fountain pen, shaving cream, tooth brush, shoe polish, necktie, garters, gold collar button tied up in a big package, or a pack of chewing gum.

For Mother: (Tie it to her ribbon and slip it in the pie when she isn't looking) gloves, stockings, thimble, handkerchief, napkin-holder, box of talcum powder, etc.

For Sister: Hat pin, tooth paste, perfume, powder puff, pocketbook, veil, needle case, nigger-baby doll, etc.

For Brother: Scarf, socks, toy pistol, pair of shoe strings, cigarette case, slippers, razor blades, etc.

Simply select the Jack Horner Pie that you want; give us the list of family names to write on the tags that go at the end of each ribbon, and select the things to be tied to each, and WE WILL SEND THE “PIE” HOME on the day before Christmas ALL READY TO SET ON THE TABLE.

The cost will be far less than you think, and the FUN WILL ADD A LOT TO THE CHRISTMAS JOY. Order yours now, before you and we are rushed.

A New Business

With that kind of advertising, properly FOLLOWED UP, I believe that very few families would be without the Jack Horner Pie for Christmas, and you would make a big lot of \$2 to \$20 sales that people would never think about, unless the idea was suggested to them. It makes double gifts in the home, of course. And only the suggestion is necessary to accomplish this result. Each individual item is small; but if you multiply the prices of the filled pies by your number of customers, *it will run into pretty substantial figures*. It is all ADDED BUSINESS, and it makes more happiness, while it makes women think that your store is more interesting than ever, for making the "happy suggestion."

"Many a Mickle" —

Some stores will handle this sort of thing in the art needlework department, others, that sell candy, will run it along with the favors in the candy department; some will put it in the notion department, if that section is managed by a clever person; again it will be carried out in the stationery department, where the pies will be made of fancy paper. The novelty manufacturers show thousands of articles exactly suited for Jack Horner pies—little toys, comic articles, fancy hats, in almost infinite variety. An ample stock of these things (if you don't carry them regularly) will require very small investment, and the mark-up profit will be very large, more than covering any possibility of left-overs. You may find that you can buy the pies ready-made, to better advantage than making them to order. That will depend upon whether you have a fancy goods workroom or not, or people clever enough to make the pies artistically as well as inexpensively.

Of course, the constant selling effort should be directed toward having articles for gifts selected from the regular stocks, like gloves, scarfs, handkerchiefs, etc., and the funny

surprises couldn't be more comic than a tooth-brush, or a box of shoe polish, or a multitude of other things that might be suggested. The one thing that must be provided for will be to have orders for the gift-things with which the pies are to be filled, taken right where the Jack Horner pies are sold.

Making It Easy

It would be mighty poor service for the store to make the customers run all over the place to find the small articles—provided, of course, that they are ready to make the decisions at your suggestion. If the whole purchase is to be “charged,” there will be no bother about prices, for the customer will take them for granted on such small and usually staple articles. Where cash is being paid, a messenger should be sent for the price-information, or the store telephone used to get exact figures, so that the complete check may be made out correctly. In almost all cases, I am sure that the proper planning and preparation will enable you to have a complete price-list of all articles likely to be suggested for immediate reference. It will also doubtless be practicable to have actual samples of the surprise articles to show to the customer, even to tooth-brushes and collar buttons.

The Reminders

After inaugurating the Jack Horner pie campaign, don't drop it. Keep reminding people of the feature by such little announcements as the following:

**What Kind of PIE do You Like
Best for Christmas?**

Now—everybody—all together, boys
and girls:

“JACK HORNER PIE, of course!”

If Mother Doesn't Forget It!

**Have You Ordered YOUR
“Jack Horner Pie” Yet?**

It's the jolliest thing about the Christmas
Dinner! Inexpensive “Surprises” for all
the Family. We'll tell you all about it
in the Favor section.

The big results from the Jack Horner pie feature depend only upon the enthusiasm and effort that are put back of the proposition. It will be BIG in sales and vastly bigger in store interest, if rightly presented and promoted.

XL

MAKING AN ATTACK ON SLOW-SELLING STOCKS

Find Out What They Are

Today the shrewd merchant avoids to the uttermost goods that he HAS TO FIGHT TO SELL! The enemy to profits, as well as to good merchandising, is the slow-turnover goods. Of course, the vital problem is to discover what are the goods that do not sell, and get that information so thoroughly into the mind of buyers and managers that the knowledge of the sluggish character of the goods may be known before new goods are bought.

The best time to get that information is on the first of May or the fifteenth of November. Every time that you pass the peak of the selling season, you can get new and definite proof of the good and bad qualities of the merchandise stocks. You cannot get this information later, because you will cut prices and sacrifice the goods, and many of them will be gone, notwithstanding their bad character as non-profit makers. The wise merchant does not merely want to know what goods have sold, but *what goods have sold at a profit*. So the stocks must be analyzed, and your vital records made, *before you cut any prices*.

Investigate Fairly

First, you must be fair to the goods. As you go through your stocks, finding goods that have not sold, be sure to find the REAL REASON why they are left on your hands! Put the blame where it belongs. On the goods, if they deserve it. On the buyer, if the goods have not been shown and advertised. On the advertising manager, if the department or the goods

have been neglected in the newspaper advertising. There will be little use in condemning the goods, if they have merely been neglected. You won't cure the evil by making a scapegoat of the merchandise.

When you find goods that have stuck on your shelves, and the buyer cannot show you the story about them in the advertising, or cannot show you when it was displayed in the windows, *put the blame for the loss right where it belongs*—on the buyer's own back. The buyer who doesn't know, on the first of May, that some of his merchandise has not had a chance to sell, and who has made no definite plans to have it displayed and advertised, is scarcely competent to have responsibility placed on him. He is not quite up to his job.

The first thing to do at this important time, is to go through all stocks, to discover what lines of goods have not sold well, and make a record of them. Place on the black list all that have been shown and advertised, and yet have not sold. Don't buy them again. Make a special list of the other goods that have not sold, but *which have not yet had a chance*. Then, as rapidly as possible, *give them the advertising and the display* that they deserve, before you cut the prices at all. Maybe a lot of people will want them, and be glad to pay full prices for them when they know about them.

Then Act Decisively

Then get to work, as quickly as possible, to sacrifice and clean out at once all the goods that are hanging over their season without showing signs of selling, after having been properly advertised. Keep all your pity for the goods *that haven't had a chance*. Get rid of all the goods that you have put on the black list, *before it is too late!* Put prices on them that will command interest, and which will make people like them, for their value. Among this merchandise is your chance to find LEGITIMATE BARGAINS, about which you can safely

make a big noise! Make every inch of every shelf in every stock answer the merchandise roll-call, and tell its reason for existence. The evidence that you get NOW will be mighty valuable:

1. For immediate merchandising and selling.
2. For profitably cleaning up stocks.
3. For your guidance in buying new goods.

Now, don't let the statement above lead you to think that the selling season is over. It is STILL AT ITS HEIGHT. Just passing the "peak" as I said before, but still holding out splendid selling opportunities for the coming weeks. Plenty of time still to do much thoroughly creative advertising and make people desire many things in your store, which until now they have heard little about. Plenty of time to make attractive displays of goods that have had little showing up to this time. Plenty of time for enthusiastic salesmanship to show itself in suggesting the usefulness and attractiveness of goods that customers have not asked for.

Lesson in Creative Salesmanship

This is the best time of the season to give salespeople and buyers another lesson in CREATIVE SALESMANSHIP. Just when buyers and salespeople are feeling that it is time to cut prices, start in to teach them all that *there is no credit in selling goods at cut prices*. The only salesmanship that is worth the name comes from selling goods on their merits, selling them for what they are and what they will do, before price is mentioned at all. Such real salesmanship is worth all the effort it takes to develop.

No Credit in Selling "Bargains"

The Department manager who permits his goods to be sold at a loss should feel severe humiliation every time he

has to cut a price. Every reduction of price *shows a failure for the buyer.*

1. It shows BAD JUDGMENT in selecting the goods.
2. It shows WEAKNESS in having paid the price he did.
3. It shows that he has LESS SALESMANSHIP than the man who sold him the goods.
4. It shows that he has NEGLECTED THE GOODS after they got into his stocks.
5. It CUTS INTO THE PROFITS that have been made on other goods.

If all these facts are fully impressed upon the buyer, he will make tremendous efforts to sell his goods at their regular prices. Many merchants make the mistake of letting reductions pass without any severe comment, and buyers grow to think it doesn't make any difference. They are mighty glad to cover up their mistakes and failures. They may cover them up as the merchandise disappears, but *they can't cover up the results in the annual balance of profits.* They may cover up their own individual failures, in stores where merchandise accounts are not strictly segregated, but they do their damage to the whole store, and often hurt someone beside the guilty party.

The Tell-Tale Slip

Every manager should be compelled to fill out a blank space on the "Mark-Down Slip," under the question: "Why could you not sell these goods at their regular prices?" And no "mark down" should be authorized until this reason is given. Then the merchant would begin to *learn infinitely more about the "ability" of his buyers.* And he would have a wonderful accumulation of testimony to put before the buyers who used his capital to buy goods that couldn't be sold at the right profit.

I should also inaugurate a system that would indicate what salespeople were selling too much cut-price goods, in order to learn who were selling the most goods on their merits at regular prices. The latter are the people who are making your profits, and they should be the ones to get the "raises" in wages.

The Information Code

The best system that I know of for this purpose is to mark all reduced goods at certain unique figures, that are never used in pricing regular goods. For instance, say you never mark regular goods at odd figures, like 3c, 7c, 9c, 11c, 13c, 17c, 19c, 21c, etc.—reserving 1c, 2c, 4c, 5c, 6c, 8c, 10c, 12c, 14c, 15c, 16c, 18c, 20c, etc., for marking regular goods. Then have the accounting department run through the sales checks of each clerk, noting down the number of sales at the cut-price figures, ending in 3, 7, 9, and 1 (excepting, of course, 1 when it stands for 1c, which you will always need). This total should be compared with the total number of sales made—giving the percentage of cut-price selling.

This system will definitely inform you as to what salespeople are of most value to your store, and it will tell you just where to place the criticism for selling only "reduced goods." When *both buyers and salespeople* begin to realize that they are definitely *discredited when they sell merely "cut-price" goods* they will begin to do vastly *more profitable work* for you.

XLI

WHAT IS THE PLAN FOR YOUR NEW SEASON'S CAMPAIGN?

The Systematic Plan

Where is the store that is able to say that its season's business campaign is completely laid out, in every detail, as exhaustively and systematically as was the campaign of Germany before she began the present war? And why shouldn't a store's merchandising and advertising campaign be so laid out? Wouldn't results be wonderfully different and amazingly larger, if it were so laid out? There is no reason to say, "Stores can't work that way," for no nation ever did such complete planning before; and so effective was Germany's preparedness that she almost conquered the world. How does she get ammunition to all her big guns on so many different frontiers? How does she get supplies, in clock-work time, to so many millions of soldiers, hundreds and thousands of miles apart? Do you suppose any mind, or any combination of minds and materials, could organize the system and facilities for doing this vast and vital work IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CAMPAIGN? Well, I guess not!

The Plan Makes Precision

England, France, Russia, and Italy paid a frightful price, in men, money, and waste, because the war started before they had any plan laid out, or any system of operations. German schedules, made years ago, show just how many hours and minutes are required for a train to go from each of her munition factories to every possible point of battle in Eu-

rope, what railroads must be traveled, and what detours are to be made in case there is any interference to any part of any line.

Nobody had to stop to figure out these obvious things. *They are all printed on the war staff's schedules.* If 875,000 men in Russia are to be supplied with beef, the responsible officials know just how many thousands of beeves must be shipped, and what allotment is to go from each supply point, and the exact hour every day when each shipment must start, to arrive at the front at the moment of demand. They know the railroad cars that are required, and the number of automobiles needed, and just where the transfer occurs, and when. System, organization, preparedness, are winning marvelous victories for Germany. Up to this time, they have proved INVINCIBLE.

No Groping in the Dark

It is a tragic thing to have to organize a campaign on the battlefield. It is proportionately WASTEFUL of sales and profits, of energy and skill, of facilities and merchandise—to do haphazard, day by day planning, without any fixed and organized campaign, when your whole organization is in the rush of mid-season selling. If you have never merchandised on a schedule, begin to do it right now. If you have always had a written working plan of campaign, decide now to work it out more fully as to details, right through the season.

Of course, you may change a dozen different features, as they come due, and you find something more important for that day, or some reason why the scheduled event is impracticable, but the PLAN should be complete for every week of the season, and if possible for every day. Then there will never be any groping in the dark, or grabbing in a hurry, for a feature in either merchandising or advertising. For instance, here is a suggested schedule, by weeks:

| | | |
|----------|----|--|
| February | 1 | Beginning of the Fancy Needlework Contest |
| " | 7 | Advance Sale of New Spring Goods |
| " | 14 | Dressmakers' Sale of Spring Sewing Necessaries |
| " | 21 | Advance Showing of New Spring Fashions |
| " | 28 | Sale of Women's Blouses at \$1, \$1.95, and \$2.95 |
| March | 6 | Spring Sale of Sheets, Pillow-Cases, and Bed-Spreads |
| " | 13 | Full Season Showing of Women's Suits and Coats |
| " | 20 | Sale of Children's Coats and Dresses |
| " | 27 | Sale of Women's Tailored Suits at \$25 |
| April | 3 | Pre-Easter Sale of Table Linens |
| " | 10 | Pre-Easter Millinery Occasion |
| " | 17 | Sale of Women's and Misses' Easter Apparel |

Fill in the Lesser Features

The above schedule supplies the big feature events for each of the twelve weeks indicated. It provides something definite to work for every week. Now, looking through your own eyes into the stocks that you know so well, it will be easy to suggest other merchandise to run in with the big Sunday advertising. Make the list complete for each Sunday. Then make a short list for Monday, then for Tuesday, etc. Do this right through the twelve weeks. Don't worry about probably having to change the lists. It will be infinitely easier to CHANGE the lists than it will be to CREATE them, in a hurry.

After you get the whole schedule arranged, begin the planning of the details. For instance: make a list of the definite items that you have purchased for the sale that begins on Feb. 7th. Take the first item and make a memorandum on a sheet of paper, telling all the facts about the goods, their desirabil-

ity, their value, the uses for which they may be sold, and any additional facts that may be useful to the advertising department. On each memorandum sheet indicate where the goods will be specially displayed or sold, and whether any of them are to be shown in a window display. Then have a memorandum of goods to be displayed in windows, and note the dates for each line of goods as you go along with your program. Keep duplicate sheets of these memorandums always convenient, so that you can make notes and additions at any time that an idea occurs to you. Send a notification to each buyer, giving a schedule of dates when goods from his department are to be specially offered, advertised, or displayed in windows.

The System Saves Work

Thus your advertising manager will have his schedule to follow systematically; the window decorator will have his schedule; the buyers will have their schedules. There will never be any chance of falling down on definite store features, if the directing mind should get married, die, or merely go fishing for a month. And still, if the directing mind should get A NEW IDEA, the necessary change may be made in all the schedules, at any time, without the least confusion.

Saves Your Profits

When working on a schedule, you will know on February 5th that there is to be a Sale of Children's Garments on March 20th, and you will know whether you should have a number of "specials" for the sale and you will have ample time to get them right. On the other hand, if you had no schedule, you might find on Thursday, March 16th, that you would like to have a special sale of Children's Garments for Monday, and you would have to cut the life out of your own profits to make your specials, instead of buying them at reduced prices, so as

to sell them at reduced prices and *still make your regular profits.*

In the successful carrying out of this policy lies all the difference between making money and wasting a big opportunity, the whole difference between SUCCESS and failure in business. It is infinitely better to buy *when the other fellow is eager to sell*, than to hurry into the market just when you must have the goods immediately. Plan your campaign. Schedule your events. Know far in advance just when you are going to need "specials." Then there will be more PUNCH in your merchandising and advertising, more interest in your store for your customers, and vastly MORE PROFITS for yourself.

PART IV

CONSTRUCTIVE ADVERTISING POLICIES

FOR upbuilding a retail business no promotive force has been discovered that compares with advertising. Nowhere in store activities will intelligent endeavor yield more definite and gratifying results. Yet the subject has been given little study by owners of business.

Writers of advertising have had scant training for their large responsibilities. Schools of advertising in the past were few, inefficient, little thought of. Some bright young man—or woman—got the job, and then swam out by personal intuition!

All this is changing. Sterile old-fashioned advertising competes futilely with the work of intelligently trained copy writers. Merchants **MUST STUDY** the principles of advertising themselves, and must find competent aids to take care of it.

These chapters should broaden the advertising vision of merchant and manager, and should direct them to the vital points in planning, writing, printing, and following up the advertising of a modern store.

XLII

FIRST PRINCIPLES OF GOOD ADVERTISING

Don't Be Satisfied

At least once every year, it is good business for every man, no matter what his vocation, to forget that he "knows it all," get down to first principles, and take a new start. We all are prone to run off on a side-track, and then keep on going, until we can scarcely get back to the main road again. What is good advertising? First, good advertising so exploits your merchandise that people will not only read your advertising, but will **BUY YOUR GOODS**. Second, to be really "good," your advertising must sell **THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT POSSIBLE**. Third, it must sell the goods so that **THEY WILL STAY SOLD**. Fourth, Good Advertising not only makes immediate sales, but it should also **CREATE** a definite amount of **GOOD WILL**, leaving with the purchaser a favorable impression that will bring him back again.

Too much advertising is carelessly done. Too many advertisers are satisfied with poor advertising because *they have always done their advertising* that way. Far too many newspaper composing rooms are run without employing even one man who knows anything about *artistic typographic form*.

The Crazy-Quilt Ad.

Every advertisement should be sent to the printer with a lay-out in full detail—showing the space to be devoted to each paragraph, the arrangement and the various type sizes that are to be used. When no instructions go with copy, most newspaper composing rooms, whether in New York City or in Devil's Gulch, will set the best copy sent them so that it will

look like the hand-bill of a "Horse and Cow for Sale," that I used to see at the cross-roads blacksmith shop in the backwoods of Pennsylvania twenty years ago. That is why so many of the advertisements that are sent to me for criticism look so hopelessly tawdry and unattractive.

One type face (in different sizes) should be used throughout the advertisement. Yet I am constantly in receipt of advertisements that show six to ten different faces, as though the printshop had only a single font of each type face. Such composition is simply frightful, and no advertiser should tolerate such conditions. Almost any newspaper will improve conditions upon demand of its advertisers, but, naturally, they don't invest in either type or typographic skill, until their customers ask for them. When you are paying real money for advertising space, you deserve to have your advertisement ATTRACTIVELY SET so that it will get the largest possible attention and command the respect of the readers of the publication. But a poorly set advertisement makes just as bad a showing for a store as a dirty or ragged salesman. Perhaps your salespeople are not making enough money to keep themselves in fine new clothes; but they *can always be clean* and neat. But the newspaper is well paid for setting your advertising. There is absolutely no excuse for its not being set in ARTISTIC MANNER and in NEW AND PERFECT TYPE. It will be so set when you demand it.

Uniformity Is Strength

You should select a definite type face for all your display headings, and demand that it always be used in your advertising, and that *no other display type ever be used* or mixed with it. Then you should select one type face for your body matter, and demand that no other type face be used, or mixed with it, unless, for some special reason you sometimes select another type for certain emphatic paragraphs.

Value of Good Pictures

The matter of illustrations is so important, so vital, that I am constantly amazed at the shabby appearance of dry goods advertisements sent me, simply because the merchants either will not pay a few dollars a month for an illustration service worth hundreds of dollars in selling value, or else because they have not come to realize the *enormous value of good pictures* in their advertising. Many stores rarely have any illustrations, excepting those that are sent to them by manufacturers, and some manufacturer's cuts look as though they were made by a blacksmith. They are made without any thought of their fitness to be used with the dealer's other cuts. This sort should be sent down to the engine room, and never permitted to disgrace your advertising columns. On the other hand, there are many very intelligently made and artistically designed manufacturers' cuts that may be used with good results. But any store that does not have a good source of original drawings should subscribe for a good syndicate service and then stick to that style, so that all of its illustrations may be in harmony, in order to produce a pleasing effect in the advertising. To have one black smudge, from one manufacturer, then a dainty outline cut from another, with still another cut in checker background from somewhere else, makes an offensive mess which destroys the power of the advertisement. The RIGHT SORT of pictures add tremendously to the attention-getting and interest-arousing value of store advertising.

Copy That Is Good

The advertising copy, to be "good," must faithfully, completely, and enthusiastically describe the goods for sale. It must be written intelligently and interestingly, in words that will be clearly understood, and which will make the merchandise alluring to readers. The head-line must convey the information which will catch the attention of the people likely

to buy that particular kind of goods, and it should arouse curiosity and interest, so that the matter following will be read. Good head-lines are rare in department store advertising.

How are you going to MAKE PEOPLE BUY the goods you advertise? Certainly you won't get very far by simply advertising "Women's New Shoes at \$4.95, of green kidskin, new last, laced, with Cuban heels, plain toes, strapped across the instep." That absolutely lacks "news interest" and "fashion stimulus," both of which are vital to that particular item. How different the results will be if the story is written this way:

"THE PRESIDENT'S FIANCÉE SETS THE
NEW FASHION IN SHOES!"

"She has selected a NEW SHADE in leather—'Bolling Green'—given it her own name, and ever-ready Fashion has been quick to adopt it, as the notable successor to 'Alice Blue' and 'Helen Pink.' Now 'Bolling Green' silks and suits require 'Bolling Green' Shoes, and they are first shown here today. Of best kidskin, in this handsome and serviceable shade; cut over a superb new last, with the smart new strapping over the instep, the fashionable plain toes and the correct Cuban heels; clever front lacing. Price, \$4.95."

Putting In Human Interest

In what way is this form different from the conventional statement above? It's longer. And some "wiseacres" say that the shortest statement is always the best. But they're definitely wrong. First, this longer form starts with a live news head-line, that will COMMAND ANY WOMAN'S ATTENTION. It tells the "story" of the new color, informs women of the fact of its existence, with the romantic reason and the distinguished inspiration of the color. It tells that the "strapping across the instep" is the "smart new thing," that the toes

are "fashionable," and that the Cuban heels are "correct." Every step of the way, it **LEADS** the thought and impression of the reader and arouses curiosity and interest to the point where the well-dressed woman *simply must see the shoes* and then buy them if she likes them.

Powerful Mental Influences

Books have been written about the "psychology" of advertising. Perhaps their titles have cooled your interest in them, but you *must recognize* the powerful mental influence that goes with successful advertising. To *lead the thought* of your readers, your words should be **VERY SIMPLE** and your meaning **DIRECT**. Human nature is the vital quality after all. The writer of good advertising copy must understand the normal human mind, must **FEEL** as the normal person feels, and must appeal to ordinary human desires.

How Not to Write Copy

I found in a November magazine, the following dead and conventional advertisement, occupying a space that cost in that one magazine nine hundred dollars:

"Special Display Week.....Mills Underwear
November 15th to 20th

Buy your Fall and Winter Underwear during the
Special Display Week of and
Underwear. This is the big selling event of the year,
and you can't afford to miss it.

Good shops in your town will be prepared to serve
you.

Watch for announcements in your local paper.
Prices range from 50c to \$3.50 per garment."

The above copy was set in large display. Then, below, in a tight little box, in the smallest type made, and almost unreadable by the heads of families who buy goods, were a very few vital facts, including this statement:

“Perfect Fitting Union Suits a Specialty

These brands have proven exceptional worthiness, and for fine knit underwear at moderate prices easily take first place.”

Isn't that an alluring announcement, to just make the money pop out of your pocket! What interest can be aroused by a display of such unattractive things as knit underwear? Why should people be interested in a so-called “big selling event,” at regular prices of 50c to \$3.50 a garment?

Why can't they “afford to miss it?” If “perfect-fitting union suits are a ‘specialty,’ ” why not say so in bigger type, in the interest-arousing part of the advertisement.

How to Improve It

Now, how shall we write a good advertisement for this nation-wide demonstration of an excellent line of underwear? We have to appeal to men and to women who want additional warmth in their apparel, but who want to avoid clumsy, ill-fitting garments. We believe that they will like this underwear well enough to buy it, *if they can be brought into local stores* to see it. The garments are well made, we know. They are moderately priced. The selling organization has arranged for these local demonstrations, which will be wonderfully valuable in making sales. We must arouse interest in our readers that will IMPEL them to WATCH for the local advertising of our underwear. What shall we say?

Personal to the Reader

Suppose we start interest by announcing an event in “Your Own Home Store.” We tell our patrons that a “Nation-wide campaign has been inaugurated,” and that they, who are reading the advertisement, are to be SHOWN in person the definite merits of these *splendid* garments. The garments are enthusiastically described, and the invitation to see them is made very personal.

Your Own Home Store

Is Making a Demonstration and Display
During the Week of November 15th to 20th, of

CAPITOL MILLS

Perfect-Fitting

UNDERWEAR

This Nation-wide campaign has been inaugurated in order to show personally to millions of men and women all over America the many definite merits of these splendid garments.

They are bound to be liked and worn wherever their virtues are known, and NO MAN or WOMAN who desires COMFORT and PERFECT FITTING QUALITIES can afford to miss seeing this demonstration.

Every Garment is HAND-FINISHED

Woven in PERFECT-FITTING Models

Separate Garments, or Union Suits—Silk or Wool

Sold at MODERATE PRICES—50c to \$3.50

Watch for the Announcement of your local store,
for it means greater comfort at no increase in price.

An announcement like this brings the national advertising campaign directly home to every customer. It is made very clear that the reader has a definite PERSONAL REASON for watching for the demonstration; and the "display" is justified. Every reader is made to *know what it is all about*.

These two examples will doubtless illustrate just what I

mean by completely and enthusiastically telling the advertising story, putting NEWS VALUE into it, and making it appeal to human nature. Stop wasting money buying newspaper space in which to print DEADLY DULL conventional statements. Make every advertisement a LIVE NEWS STORY, or an enthusiastic description of your merchandise, and you will find a vast improvement in the results from your advertising during the coming year.

XLIII

WHAT ADVERTISING SHALL TAKE THE PLACE OF THE BARGAIN SCREAMS?

"Bargains" Have Lost Their Force

Thoughtful merchants all over the country have definitely expressed their convictions that "bargain screams" have lost their force, that they produce ever diminishing selling results, while calling for ever increasing advertising cost. Recently a merchant wrote me: "Reform in advertising is more needed than anything else in retail department store business." Another wrote me: "I wish every retail merchant in the United States might be compelled to read your article on 'Creative Retail Advertising.' It would put them on a saner basis than has existed in the past, on account of the hysterical, circus-like, unreasonable, and defective methods that have prevailed in the years gone by." One of the cleverest advertising men in the West wrote me: "Your discussion of retail advertising certainly stirred me up, so that I am going to experiment with regular goods at regular prices. *Bargains certainly have a death grip on us.*"

The owner of a successful business in Pennsylvania wrote me: "I always contended that a merchant in telling the facts, just as they are, in plain words, would be the trade-winner in the long run, and my success is evidence of this truth, as I STARTED WITH NOTHING and am today *the foremost dry goods merchant* and also the proprietor of the largest ready-to-wear store in this city." Mr. Manley M. Gillam, my famous predecessor at Wanamaker's, said in a note to me a little while ago: "I am glad of every move that tends to take department store

advertising away from the monotonous bargain cry." A western merchant writes: "Merchandise at regular prices and merchandise at reduced prices *for clearance purposes only*, are now featured 50-50 proportion in our advertising with maximum returns to us for so doing. We have found storekeeping *much more worth our while* since adopting this policy."

Merchants Want a Better Policy

Not less than a hundred merchants have written to me at various times, expressing their disgust or discouragement over bargain advertising—with the poor results in profits at the end of the season, after such promotion, and with the lowering of the tone of the business where they and their competitors continuously exploit bargain offerings. All progressive merchants are agreed that a change must be made, and many are ready to adopt any new policy that will show any probability of maintaining business without the constant bargain screams.

Up in Boston William Filene's Sons have proved that price comparisons are NOT necessary to increased business. No price comparisons ever appear in their advertising, and yet they are probably making *the biggest increase in volume of sales* of any store in America, with a correspondingly high increase in profits. The problem that most earnest and honest merchants want solved is: What shall take the place of bargain screams? That is the question which I am going to try to answer.

People Are Keen for New Things

In the first place, I am going to state a fact which the merchant MUST BELIEVE. More people are interested in the new spring goods than are interested in bargains, during the early spring days. That is just as true as that a man's body will float if he lies flat on his back and *permits himself to float*. He won't float, if he kicks around and holds his head up to see if

he is floating. Neither will people be most interested in new goods if the merchant shouts bargains in their ears all the time, as though *he had nothing else of any interest in his store*. People run for bargains only because foolish merchants boost them too much. Advertising usually sells the goods that are advertised. If this were not true, then advertising would not be the power that we all know it is.

Study What People Want

My answer to our question: "What shall take the place of bargain screams?" is as follows:

1. Advertise your NEW GOODS in an interest-compelling way.
2. Get out of your system the idea that nothing is attractive to your customers except a cut price.
3. Study the necessities and desires of your customers so that you can intelligently select for advertising purposes the goods that they are most interested in reading about and buying AT THAT PARTICULAR TIME.
4. Use attractive illustrations—all in harmonious and uniform style.
5. Have your advertisements set in attractive typographical style, in a standard form, always using the same type faces and the same border. Have it set exactly the same in all newspapers that you use.

In providing a substitute for bargain screams, remember that every advertisement *must be made attractive to the readers*. Now let us discuss for a moment the question: "What makes goods seem attractive to customers?" Low price is one thing, and in the past it has seemed to most merchants to be the ONLY attractive thing. Let us admit it, for the time, and set it aside. What else?

The MOST ATTRACTIVE things in the world TO ALL WOMEN are:

- New fashions
- New patterns and new colorings in fabrics
- New decorations for the home
- New conveniences for housekeeping
- New things for the children

Things that women LIKE TO READ ABOUT are:

- New ways to make things
- New ways to use things
- Suggestions about dressmaking
- Suggestions about fixing up the home
- Suggestions about dressing the children
- Suggestions for entertaining friends and visitors

Good Copy Takes Work and Skill

All of these things may easily be done while advertising your goods—in making the goods seem more desirable and more NECESSARY to the comfort and happiness of the reader. All of these things are constantly done by Wana-maker's and other shrewd advertisers. Of course, such advertising takes WORK AND SKILL. It requires thought and study and the digging up of facts. It requires that the writer of the advertising shall *know all about the goods*, their uses, and why people should want them. The compiler of such advertising is no mere tabulator of details and price figures. He or she must have definite ABILITY. But why should the vital promotion work, by which the life and success of the store exist, be in the hands of anyone who does not have ability?

Inaugurating the Spring

Instead of the usual bargain page for the opening advertisement of the month of March, let us plan such a page as this:

1. Big Top Feature: "Exhibition of the New Styles in Women's Spring Suits." Illustrate this section with an unusually handsome picture of women's suits; and describe several of the most attractive models—telling just how they improve on the styles of previous seasons and how graceful and becoming they are. Make it a real fashion article—just as though it were to be printed in the news pages of the newspapers, and the writer were being paid for writing it by the editors.

2. "Charming Fabrics for Spring Gowns"—telling the story of the new weaves and colorings, and what sort of gowns each fabric will best make. Tell how easy the making will be with the aid of the right paper pattern.

3. "Pure Flax Linens that Housekeepers Will Admire." From the fast diminishing supplies, gathered before the war destroyed the choicest flax fields and the most skilful workers in linen production.

4. "Toilet Goods that Aid Personal Attractiveness." Only one person in ten uses tooth brush and dentifrice. Are you one of the ten, whom it is a pleasure to talk to; or one of the nine that people hurry to get away from? The new shaving cream takes six minutes off the time of shaving, and makes the razor blade stay sharp four times as long, saves cuts and soothes the skin, etc. Tell them something.

5. "Aluminum Cooking Utensils that Make Housekeeping a Delight." Bright, clean, healthful, no cracking or chipping, light in weight, practically indestructible. See the folding pan that makes the wonderful omelet, the delicious hashed brown potatoes, or pans a steak. Simply turn over the whole pan; nothing lost, and burning almost impossible. See the fine double boilers, the bright tea kettles and skillets, and the best saucepans you ever used. You'll never be happy about your kitchen until every cooking utensil is aluminum. Buy now before the war takes all the aluminum as it threatens to do.

6. "The Smart Shoes for Spring." Everybody is talking about the new DOVE-GRAY, in women's footwear. It is charmingly illustrated in a new high-laced buckskin shoe, in a neutral tone that will go with almost any color of gown. Doubles the smartness of any outfit.

7. "New Brassieres for Transparent Blouses." The new blouse fashion demands this charming accessory. The new brassiere is made of pink net, with pink ribbons over the shoulders, and shields that really protect the blouse while being themselves unseen.

Will Stir Customer's Interest

While this may not be a possible arrangement of merchandise to be carried out as shown, I believe that such an advertisement as is here outlined, would attract far more attention from the best buying part of his community than any bargain advertisement that could be prepared at this particular season. Now, if such an advertisement can arouse the interest of women, and make them anxious to come to the store and see all these new and interesting things, *is it not certain* that when they come they will buy vastly more goods, on which the merchant will realize far GREATER PROFIT than on his bargain offerings? Will not such advertising, besides, *give everybody a much higher opinion of your store?*

XLIV

FORCE VS. ATTRACTION—A FUNDAMENTAL ADVERTISING ERROR

Bargain vs. Regular Advertising

Advertising may be divided into two principal classes, and the policy of the two classes is absolutely opposite. The first is BARGAIN ADVERTISING, which is really an attempt to force people to come and buy the goods. The other is REGULAR ADVERTISING, in which the real attractions of the merchandise are presented to create desire on the part of the people to want these particular goods. The one policy means the forcing of goods at reduced prices upon people who really do not want them, while the other policy relies upon finding exactly the people who want the goods you have for sale and who will gladly pay a profitable price when buying them. By failing to distinguish properly between these two classes of advertising, most merchants lose a large part of the profits that should come from the actual business they do.

Success in storekeeping depends far less on the volume of business done, than it does on the profit that has been secured on the year's turnover. Some years ago it seemed as though the only thing necessary was to sell a large volume of goods, with the certainty that there would be enough profit left over at the end of the year to make a good showing. This policy has continued to such a great extent that many merchants find themselves in a precarious financial condition, because, while their records show a satisfactory or even an increased volume of business, the balances on their books at the end of the fiscal year show continually decreasing net

profit. This is because many stores have long since reached the line of diminishing returns in the volume of business they have done. They have spent so much time forcing their goods down the throats of people by CUT PRICES, or alleged bargain advertising, that they have not only actually reduced their profits, but they have tremendously multiplied their expenses.

People Will Pay for What They Like

This crude use of cut-price force to make business is unscientific and absolutely inefficient. Every year the number of merchants who can succeed on this policy is becoming smaller and smaller. The time has arrived when the other policy must be recognized and followed. The merchant who gathers the goods that the people of his community require, should be able to make a living profit on everything he sells. People, as a rule, are perfectly willing to pay a fair price for merchandise that they really want. But an artificial condition has been created by building up a feeling in people's minds that they should always buy things under price. Many millions of people have been educated into accepting goods that are not exactly what they want, in the hope of securing some vague, indefinite, higher value in an article that is not quite the thing wanted.

Exactly the Right Thing

When merchants get back to selling people exactly what they want, and when their advertising begins to have the effect of making people believe that it is vastly better to secure exactly what they want—exactly the thing suited to their requirements at a fair price—rather than something else that they do not exactly want and that doesn't meet their needs, though it is obtainable at an alleged bargain price, merchants will begin to make bigger profits and customers will be a great deal happier with the goods that they buy. It

will tremendously decrease the number of exchanges that must be made by the stores and thus reduce the percentage of returned goods with the expense of bringing them back to the store and the damage that comes to the goods, which become mussed up and soiled by going from one customer to another before being finally sold, all of which was pointed out in Chapter XII.

In my advertising office I would put up this motto, which would be always before the eyes of my copywriters:

Remember that the object of this business is not to force undesirable goods on people, at reduced prices; but our REAL OBJECT is to find the people who want exactly the merchandise we have and who will be glad to pay a profitable price for it.

Such an injunction as this should change the whole attitude of mind of the advertising manager and his assistants. It should give them a new point of view about storekeeping and advertising. Probably every good piece of merchandise ever made has been greatly desired by many people. Where storekeeping too often fails is in getting the merchandise before the eyes of the people who will admire or need it.

Find Those Who Want It

This is one of the chief tasks of the merchant, and of his advertising manager, to get the information about his merchandise, presented in an attractive and intelligent manner, to the direct attention of the people who want those particular goods. Of course, this is not an easy problem. It is not a job to be given to a careless, indifferent, commonplace man or woman. It is for this reason that the advertising manager and all advertising writers should be people of exceptional intelligence. They should be clear thinkers; they should have considerable imagination; they should have the instinct of the hunter, the fisherman, and the good salesman, all combined,

together with the ability to tell a graphic and enthusiastic story every time they write a paragraph about merchandise.

Of course, it is absolutely necessary for a merchant to move merchandise that is lagging. That is VITAL in good storekeeping. The first thought is to reduce the price; but I presume that nine times out of ten, prices are reduced because of lack of wise merchandising and advertising discrimination. It may not be a matter of PRICE at all, which causes merchandise to stick on the shelves. Sometimes it is because foolish salespeople have taken a dislike to merchandise and do not show it, and their judgment may be very bad. Their tastes may be very different from that of their customers.

No merchandise should be judged until it is shown to the customers. The best buyers in the world and the smartest salespeople in the world find themselves entirely incompetent in judging what many people will buy. Very often the thing that expert buyers and salespeople have condemned will be purchased with delight by many customers, who would not purchase at all the same merchandise in patterns that the experts have approved.

Try Various Ways

The story is told about A. T. Stewart that when he discovered in stock a number of paisley shawls that had not been sold, he inquired how long they had been there. For several years, the salesman said, people were not buying them any more; he thought the price should be very radically reduced so that they could be closed out. Mr. Stewart immediately replied: "Young man, don't you know that paisley shawls are becoming very scarce and that their value has increased? Some women will want these shawls and will want them very badly and we cannot afford to sell them at the price they are marked." Thereupon he increased the price 50 per cent and made a mention in his advertising of the

fact that he had several paisley shawls, and they were very quickly sold at the higher figure.

This would indicate that when goods of slow sale are discovered, some thought should be given to the merchandise by the merchant, as well as by the advertising manager. It may be entirely possible that the goods should be reduced in price, but before this is done the matter should be considered from various points of view. For one thing, will the goods be attractive to many people at their reduced price? Will people be glad that they were able to secure them at the reduced price and thereby think better of the store? For another, have you really brought this merchandise to the attention of the people who should want it? What can you do to bring it more impressively to their direct attention? Perhaps the answer will be a window display. Perhaps it will be merely bringing out the goods and placing them on a special counter. Perhaps it will be getting up a little circular to illustrate them and tell their story. Perhaps it will be to call certain customers on the telephone, asking them if they have seen this merchandise and explaining the fact that here is something that they ought to be specially interested in. Perhaps it will be the writing of an attractive advertisement for the newspapers, with the proper illustration.

Cutting Prices Needlessly

Certainly no merchandise should be reduced in price and the profit thrown away, until you are certain that it cannot be sold at full prices, by proper advertising, by proper display, or by bringing it to the direct attention of the people who ought to want it. Most merchandise, which comes into the store, has been selected because the merchant or the buyer thought that it would appeal very definitely to some customer of the house. This assumption should never be abandoned until every effort has been made to bring the goods, or their

story, to the direct attention of the people who you originally thought would want them.

I am very certain that at least 75 per cent of the merchandise that finally has to be reduced in price, has never had the right chance to win a sale at its full price. So much merchandise is absolutely neglected from a selling point of view and so little merchandise is properly advertised, that the work of the blue pencil has been multiplied in a wasteful and discouraging manner. A great many merchants and their advertising writers seem entirely occupied with forcing the public *to buy what they do not want*. The result is that they have no advertising space left to exploit the goods which they really are in business to sell.

Regular Prices and Full Profits

I am sure that there is no other factor in storekeeping today that will tend so much to bring larger success to the merchant and to make more profits out of his business for him, than settling upon a policy of advertising merchandise in an attractive and intelligent manner, so as to get new goods sold at their REGULAR PRICES and at FULL PROFITS to the people who are as eager to buy as the merchant is to sell.

It is a matter of securing an advertising man or woman who has the intelligence or the capacity to study the merchandising phase of the problem. The task is to advertise *all* the merchandise of the store so as to bring it to the attention of people who want exactly that merchandise. This is so different from ordinary department store advertising that it requires a totally different kind of ability. Perhaps it will be found necessary, eventually, to have two different people, or two different classes of people, in the advertising organization of every store in the country. It is almost like having one kind of dog for hunting birds and another for hunting bears. Perhaps we have always been expecting too much of

one individual. Perhaps the instinct that can bring a tremendous crowd through bargain advertising, cannot possibly exist in the mind of the individual who can write an alluring story about regular merchandise at regular prices. Certainly we should never take bird dogs with us when we are hunting bears, or the bears might get us first, and certainly we should get very few birds if we took bear dogs on that trip. A merchant will not get on very far nowadays unless he realizes that hunting customers takes just as much common sense efficiency as hunting birds and animals. It is vital to get the game we are after and the specialized work to be done requires specialized ability to do it.

A Solid Growing Business

When a merchant has settled upon bargain advertising—as so many seem to have done—as the one factor he will use in pushing his business, he has restricted himself to only half a business, and only a small-profit business at that. In many instances business has been so good that the merchant could make success with this kind of promotion. But the thoughtful merchant and the one who is most anxious to build a *solid*, growing, profitable business is going to study earnestly the question of going after the other kind of game. He is going to learn how to win customers who will be delighted to secure his regular goods at their regular prices, people who are interested in getting exactly the goods they want to fit their needs exactly, rather than people who will accept goods that are not exactly suited to their use, because there is the allurements of their being worth a little more, or very much more than the actual price paid.

XLV

BACK TO REALITIES IN RETAIL ADVERTISING

Truthfulness and Honor

Today the world's greatest experts in advertising acknowledge that truth and honesty are the most powerful factors in securing profitable results. It is an inspiration to a man's highest mentality to feel that every effort that he makes to promote his business may bear the hall-mark of truthfulness and honor. This doctrine has not always been believed in the advertising business. Many have said, indeed, that truth and honesty are unattainable in department store advertising. Right-thinking men now believe that truth and honesty are attainable. We know that "honesty is the best policy," and we are determined to learn how to develop more of the power that belongs to TRUTH.

Let us consider first the weakness of present department store advertising.

We all see that most of the department store advertising of today lacks power and forcefulness. There are various reasons for this condition. The continuous demand for increased sales has created advertising HYSTERIA.

Advertising Hysteria

Department store competition has developed a frightful intensity during the past ten years. The pressure on the advertising writer has become an overwhelming weight. Dictionaries have been stripped of their adjectives, and price comparisons have become a matter of ridicule. Bargain screams have become a daily habit in sensational stores, and bargain offerings, though stated in more conventional words,

have been the persistent recourse of even the most dignified stores in the land. But though the copy is written in varying forms, it is a humiliating commercial fact that stores of every class, from one end of the country to the other, have founded their advertising policy on one foundation. They have assumed that there is no advertising news interesting to the public that does not bear the bargain allurements as its chief attraction.

“Rooting” for the Bargain Costly

I hope I shall never underrate the value of the bargain in advertising. It has a mighty important function. But I want to state with all the emphasis that I can use, that in at least half of the advertising of a store *price should be the last thing considered*. Continuous “rooting” for the bargain is bad storekeeping policy. It leads public attention in the wrong direction. To be continuously “boosting” reduced goods is like running a “second-hand goods” store. The flaunting of nothing but bargains is an insult to a store’s better customers. It carries the daily insinuation that all your goods are slightly passé—not quite up to the standard and hence cannot be sold at the prices they were made to bring. It undermines public confidence in your store.

Then the policy of continuous price comparisons leads the most careful and zealous advertiser into printing frequent falsehoods. It is like the deadly P. M. system, of paying a premium to salespeople who sell your bad stock. When they get the fever effectually, they feel as though they had lost some money every time they sell good merchandise—and they never show a new article to customers, for fear it will be bought, and they won’t get their premium. So the advertising man who is always boosting bargains gets to the point where he won’t say a word about new goods, and he starves his store and keeps away the store’s best customers.

I want to urge every merchant and advertising man to help turn this old boat around. We've been going the wrong way. It is the way of INCREASED ADVERTISING EXPENDITURE, with ever diminishing sales-making power. It is the way of driving manufacturers to cheapen their products, when we should be creating a market for better goods every year.

"New Goods and Better Goods" Pay Better

I wish I could impress department store men with their unique responsibility. The advertising you print every day is *moulding the habits of the nation*. If you expend all your splendid enthusiasm and advertising appropriations to train people to want nothing but cheap goods and bargains that will be all that our manufacturers dare make. The debasing of the quality of our national products is largely to be blamed upon department store advertising. If, on the other hand, you devote your advertising skill and your pages of space to making people desire and demand better and finer goods, you will make bigger sales, larger profits, better satisfied customers for your store, and become a mighty factor in improving the quality of American manufactured products.

In twenty years of department store advertising, I have never been so completely convinced as I am today, that more business can be created for a store by exploiting the DESIRABILITY of the goods than by the lowness of the price. Particularly in the big buying season, most people want NEW things of GOOD quality. Desirability at a FAIR price is vastly more attractive to millions of people than undesirable, second quality, *passé* goods at a reduced price.

An Illuminating Experience

Some years ago I had a most valuable and illuminating experience with the advertising of a client, a retail store. The result proved to me most completely that there is something

infinitely more powerful than the bargain appeal in winning the attention of women and making large sales of apparel. A series of advertisements of women's ready-to-wear garments was prepared for the store, devoted entirely to exploiting the style, quality, and general points of desirability of the garments. The price was not made a feature and there was no suggestion of bargain value at all.

This series of advertisements was criticised by the manager and the firm. It was contended that there should be more direct selling punch put into the copy, more that would hurry people to come into the store on that particular day to buy. Finally, with great reluctance, the advertising was allowed to stand and it was run in the newspapers with a feeling on the part of the merchant and the buyer that it would bring little result. The results were amazing! During a period of six weeks the business more than doubled the sales records of the previous year, when the other sort of advertising had been strenuously carried out.

Character Advertising

While the hurry-up feature was not used in this advertising, and while the bargain suggestion was entirely absent, the strongest possible statements about the character, the quality, the good style, the becomingness, and the excellence of construction of the garments were put into the copy. This sort of advertising was practically unknown in that city. It was the first time that any store really set itself to recommend women's garments for their real values as women's apparel. Competitors were talking price reductions and thereby discounting their merchandise, suggesting that it could not be first class, or it would not be sacrificed.

I believe the time has come for the better stores to stop insinuating to their customers that they want something that is slightly off in style, in order to save a few dollars. I believe

that it can be easily demonstrated that the largest and most profitable part of any shopping community is much more interested in getting the new and correct style and the most desirable merchandise, than in saving a few dollars. Of course, I recognize the necessity of the bargain in the conduct of any big business. Merchandise that will not sell at its anticipated price must be reduced, the story must be told, and the bargain part of the community must be appealed to, to clear up that stock. Moreover, it is important that a store should appeal to all classes of the community, to do the largest volume of business; but the bargain advertising I believe should be secondary to the REAL advertising.

I believe that it is to the last degree WASTEFUL for a merchant to have his store filled with thousands, or hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of fine new merchandise, which never gets a word in the newspapers. Very few stores give much space or enthusiasm in the newspapers to advertising their fine new merchandise. Bargain merchandise, or alleged bargain merchandise, gets all the space in the papers, and most of the space on the special counters.

Merchants and advertising managers *must change their attitude of mind*. They must themselves respect their public more. They must stop assuming that all the desirable trade is made up of bargain hunters. They must begin to appreciate the fact that a vast majority of people are really interested in STYLE and QUALITY.

The Romance of Merchandise

I wish I could take you through a hundred different factories that are producing merchandise for you to sell. I should like to introduce you to the artists and designers who have dreamed over their patterns, and who have created wonderful pictures and poems in merchandise. The commodity which you look at in a matter-of-fact way on the counters, may be

admired by you in a moment's glance, but you can get no conception of the glow of pride that went through the heart of the designer when he finished the model or the pattern. If you could get something of this enthusiasm into your system, if you could get part of the artist's dream, if you could feel the manufacturer's satisfaction when he made it a commercially priced product, you would be so full of enthusiasm that your advertising columns would overflow to the readers of your city, and your salespeople would be busy selling the merchandise to delighted customers, at the regular prices, and bringing the full profits. And you would not only be making sales of your merchandise. Advertising so full of enthusiasm would create prestige for your store, that would make it stand out in your community as the one place where people wanted to go.

Just Missing the Gold

When I look at most department store advertising, and at the same time recall what splendid merchandise is to be found in every good store all over the continent, it makes me think of the miner who is digging copper and other inferior metals out of the ground, while just a little deeper in the ground is a rich vein of pure gold that he is ignoring, or about which he does not know.

Daily bargain advertising is wasteful of space. It has lost most of its force because it has become so common, and because most of it is deceptive, or creates an impression that is deceptive. Let us get into our minds a new idea and a strong determination to carry it out. Let us decide to stop boosting shoddy, and start in to support the finer industries of our country. Let us devote our genius and skill and our advertising appropriations to the boosting of fine merchandise, to the exploiting of the art, skill, and efficiency of American artists and manufacturers. In this way we shall not only

be benefiting the great industries of the country, but I am very sure that each store will be building up a larger, more profitable, and certainly a more enduring business for its far-sighted owners.

Larger Sales and Profits

It is not a work of philanthropy that I am inviting you to undertake. I am pointing out sheer self-interest, larger sales and larger profits, greater prestige for your store, and a gathering into it of the best customers in your city. Such advertising as this will create new business that no bargain competition can take away from you. The bargain hunters simply drift from store to store. They never become a constituency. They are not an asset, but a continuous liability. They are parasites eating up your profits, and the merchant who constantly exploits bargains draws only these parasites, the unprofitable clientele, and at the same time drives away from his store the desirable customers and the most profitable business.

To sum up the whole matter, let us first study and avoid the weaknesses common to present-day advertising. Let us study and develop the unquestioned power of creative advertising. Let us endeavor to sell better merchandise and to determine that we are not going to permit fine, new goods to lie hidden and unknown on the shelves of our store, because bargain advertising has taken up all our newspaper space. Tack above the desk of every manager the motto:

“THE BEST IN THE WORLD IS NONE TOO GOOD FOR
OUR CUSTOMERS.”

And then every time the new things come into the store, tell all their virtues and merits, in the most enthusiastic manner, to the thousands of people who are just waiting for the best things that you can find to show them.

Good Merchandise at Full Profits

Impress upon the minds of your customers the fine things that are thoroughly good, and thus help to boost the quality of American merchandise. Stop permitting second-hand goods, damaged and out-of-date merchandise to fill your advertising columns, and gather into your store the finest trade in the community for thoroughly good merchandise, sold at regular prices and full profits.

Let the foundation of your advertising copy be complete KNOWLEDGE of your goods. Let the advertising writer fill himself full of the facts about their MERITS. Let him write the story in the powerful words of TRUTH. Let him gild the tale with honest ENTHUSIASM. Endeavor to sell the goods to people who will most appreciate their POSSESSION. Thus sales will vastly increase. The goods sold will stay sold. You will have a prosperous business and SATISFIED CUSTOMERS. And the writer of advertising will take a new joy and pride in his honorable and productive profession.

XLVI

MAKE ONE THING IMPRESSIVE IN EVERY ADVERTISEMENT

The "Keynote"

The politician long ago learned the vital power of a "keynote" for every campaign. His party platform may stand for many policies, but the battle of votes is won by picking out the right keynote and playing it to the limit, until people come to believe that the only way to secure legislation in line with the keynote is to elect that party to office.

So in advertising your store, pick out a keynote for every advertisement, and make every advertisement help create a powerful impression about one of your strong departments. For instance, you have planned to advertise:

Shoes

Blouses

Women's Suits

Boys' Clothing

Knit Underwear

Table Linens

Vary the Feature

Some stores under such circumstances would ALWAYS make women's suits the big feature, whenever they were advertised. Such a policy would be a gross injustice to the other stocks and would produce a one-sided selling result for the store, to the great loss of sales in other departments. Let us say that we do give the big space at the top of the advertisement to women's suits this week. But next week, or tomorrow, let us give the big space to table linens, and advertise, not a few grades of linens and napkins, but—

“A Wonderfully Interesting

LINEN STORE

That will delight every artistic housekeeper with its comprehensive selections of sturdy and beautiful linens from the world's best manufacturers.”

Let us so advertise our linens for this one day, that people will almost feel sure that ours is the *only complete* and skillfully selected stock of linens in our city. Give the public a BIG and IMPRESSIVE idea of the importance of linens in our store. Even if they are not ready to buy on that particular day the big advertisement will be remembered, and our store will not be forgotten when linens are wanted.

The Big Impression

In the meantime the big advertisement of linens will be good advertising for the entire store, for it will carry the definite impression that our store *does things in a big way*. This is very valuable advertising, and reflects credit and prestige on every other department of the store.

The weakest advertisement is the one where all departments advertised are ON A DEAD LEVEL, where the whole appearance of the page is flat, with no dominating announcement—nothing to *command attention*. Continuous advertising of this sort, even if the store uses a full page of space every day, becomes sadly monotonous and never arouses public enthusiasm. The advertising that presents ONE BIG FEATURE every day not only has a powerful influence on the public mind in creating a feeling of importance for all the featured departments, but also creates the valuable impression that *yours is a very live store*.

About September first, one year, R. H. Macy & Co., New York, published a full page advertisement in the costly

New York papers on children's school apparel. It is not likely that the direct sales from that advertising amounted to much more than the actual money paid for the advertising. But the impression created was so tremendous that thousands of mothers were impelled to feel that Macy's was the biggest children's wear store in New York, and the results of that advertising doubtless lasted for many months. Results began to show at once in other departments in two ways. First, it brought mothers with children to the store, who purchased in many cases several times as much in other departments as they purchased in the children's departments. Second, it made people feel that because Macy's had such vast stocks of children's wear they must also have unusually complete stocks of other goods; that, if they cared for children in such a big way, they provided still more broadly, of course, for grown-ups.

Command Attention

Make *one thing* in every advertisement so big, so attractive, so interesting, that *it will command attention* and be recognized as a big event or as important news about stocks or merchandise of unusual character or completeness. At Gimbel Brothers, New York, in less than two years we built up the biggest volume of sales in America in blouses and millinery, largely because we so advertised these stocks in big space and with big and impressive illustrations, that the women of New York came to feel that none of the other big stores were really in competition with us. Of course, these stocks were well merchandised; but so were the same stocks in several other big stores. We won the big victory and the enormous volume of business, by doing the biggest and most impressive advertising of blouses and millinery that had ever been done anywhere!

How far do you suppose we would have got with these

stocks at Gimbels, if we had been satisfied to advertise in the usual monotonous half-hearted way? BIG VOLUME in a store's sales can be attained only by the careful, patient, continuous *building up of every department in the store.*

By pursuing the advertising policy here discussed you will be able to make a valuable test of the healthy condition of every stock in your store. Wherever you find a line of merchandise that is not strong enough to be worthy of being specially featured under this plan, *it needs the attention of the merchandise doctor.* At least twice a year, at the start of sewing time, even the modest notion department will repay being featured BIG. Gimbel Brothers built up a perfectly enormous volume in ribbons by featuring them in a big way every once in a while.

The little departments, as pointed out in Chapters VIII and IX, are often mismanaged. Merchants wonder why the sales in these departments are so small. They get so discouraged often that they want to throw out these unprofitable departments. But they are afraid to do so, because they must have the goods when wanted. So they permit the little department to merely exist, and stand the loss. This is the common policy, very weak and foolish; because the right sort of merchandising, together with strong, intelligent advertising, would probably win for your store the BIG BUSINESS OF YOUR CITY in that particular department. Instead of a handicap you will have a live asset.

When a certain line of merchandise, which is ordinarily only a small department in the usual store, gains the position where it commands the largest trade in that line in the city, it often becomes a large and profitable business, and definitely creates prestige and attracts customers for the store. When you can't do everything big, *do one thing so big* and so well that it will give the impression of general bigness to your whole business.

Some Big Thing Every Day

Have one big feature in every advertisement you publish, and thus create the reputation for your store of doing *some big thing every day*. This is the best method to secure direct daily returns, as well as to give the public impression of LIFE and PROGRESSIVE ACTIVITY for your store.

XLVII

MAKING MONEY OUT OF NATIONAL ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

Utilize the Big Force

It is commonly estimated that more than six hundred millions of dollars are spent annually by national advertisers in exploiting their merchandise which is sold entirely through local dealers. This estimate is not the high water mark of one year, but the conservative AVERAGE for many years. This vast investment would not be continued year after year, if it were not profitable and if it were not definitely *proved* that the advertising *sells the goods advertised*. It means that not less than ten billion (\$10,000,000,000) dollars' worth of goods are sold every year by local dealers as a direct result of this advertising.

How much of YOUR annual business is sent into your store by national advertisers? And *how much more business* would you secure out of this vast expenditure of the money of the great manufacturers, if you would make as much as possible of this national advertising your advertising?

You are in business *to make more money*. You are doubtless keen *to make more sales*. You would doubtless be glad to handle more goods that are easy to sell. We hear a lot nowadays about "the rising cost of doing business." Every day it is getting harder and harder to sell goods that are not backed by big national advertising. Every day, more and more people are showing that they have largest confidence in nationally advertised goods. Every day the national campaigns grow more skilful and efficient.

Big Advertising Builds Confidence

Today progressive merchants are realizing as they have never realized before, that *the cost of selling is vastly less* on nationally advertised goods; that branded articles sell more quickly than other goods; that they can get new supplies of such goods more quickly; that they have fewer complaints about trade-marked merchandise than they have of other goods; and, most vital fact of all, *they can make more turnovers* of advertised goods than they can of unbranded goods. Every well-informed merchant KNOWS that he makes his *sure profits on turnovers*.

Make It Help You

Now, how shall you take the best possible advantage of national advertising to make it *bring more customers into your store* and show more profits on your monthly balances? A lot of "bunk has been handed out" to storekeepers about "advertising that we are going to do," by salesmen who used this argument to "stock up the dealer," and many merchants, who have been "stuck" with that game, are now suspicious of all such arguments. But because one man deceives you is no reason why you should call all men liars. If you are doing a credit business and a certain percentage of your "Charge Customers" fail to pay their bills, you don't stop giving credit to others.

Where Will These Goods Be Bought?

A large number of national advertisers are today planning big and honest campaigns that will actually sell millions of dollars worth of their products over the counters of local dealers who co-operate with the campaigns. These advertisers realize the vital importance of *letting people know just where to buy the goods advertised*. They do everything they can to get the dealers to co-operate and to show the goods

and the advertising provided for their use. They also realize the importance of informing the dealers in advance of the appearance of big advertising of their products.

Now, you are not interested in helping the manufacturer, of course. You are not running a charity bazaar for the manufacturers' benefit. Certainly not. Neither are you an ostrich, hiding your head in a hole. But you are in business to *sell all the goods you can*. If there is going to be big advertising in the magazines that the people in your city read, and if it is to be backed up by local newspaper advertising in your own local newspapers, you know that A LOT OF PEOPLE are going to want the goods advertised. If you are alive to your big opportunity, you will endeavor to make those people buy the wanted goods in your store.

That is only the simplest merchandising sense. These goods are going to be easy to sell, for they will be MORE THAN HALF SOLD before the people come into your store. But don't forget that they are only partly sold. If you are to get the greatest possible sales from that advertising, you must do your part to *turn the interest* created by the advertising *into money in your cash drawer*.

Like Wireless Telegraphy

National advertising is exactly like wireless telegraphy in the way that it carries its message. Think of the great ocean liner, equipped with the best possible facilities for sending wireless messages for a thousand miles in every direction. It strikes a hidden iceberg and at once the S. O. S. call of the wireless is sent out with magnificent strength a thousand miles in every direction. There are a hundred vessels within its reach, but no vessel within a day's journey is equipped with wireless, and the vessel is lost. Of what use is the magnificent sending apparatus, if there is NO RECEIVING APPARATUS on the vessels that might have saved those lives?

Your Receiving Station

So in advertising, there must be receiving stations where the customers who have been filled with a desire for the goods advertised may come and find the goods they want. The dealer, to complete the circuit of sales, must *send out enough of his own energy* to attract and bring into his store the people who have the partly developed desire for the goods. This he can do by means of local advertising in newspapers, by showing the goods on his counters and in his windows *at the time the national advertising is appearing*. He will thus make the big national advertising his advertising in his city and get vastly more than his share of the business that the national advertising has created in his territory.

To illustrate more definitely the value of hooking up with big national advertising, I want to use, as an example, a campaign that was prepared in an organization with which I was associated, because it shows in a very interesting manner just what stores might do to get big results from advertising, to the extent of more than \$100,000 in a period of ten days. This campaign demonstrates just how stores might take advantage of scores of other national campaigns got out by other agents for other manufacturers, to create large interest for stores all over the country and add greatly to their volume of sales.

A Specimen Campaign

In seeking to develop a larger market for a fire extinguisher, it was decided to create a big automobile drive for ten days, beginning April 20th. In this campaign full pages were planned for *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's Weekly*, and *The Literary Digest* to appear on April 20th and 21st. A double page advertisement appeared a little later in *The Saturday Evening Post* and single pages in the other publications. There were also half pages appearing at the

same time in *The Ladies' Home Journal*, *The Woman's Home Companion*, and *Good Housekeeping*, to exploit the vital need of this fire extinguisher in the home. During the same week full pages were used in the local newspaper in fifty-five of the larger cities throughout the United States. Simultaneously there appeared full page advertisements in a number of farm papers throughout the United States, impressing upon the farmer the importance of having fire protection in his home, in his barn, and in his other buildings, as well as for his automobiles and tractors.

There is no question but that this campaign, so *tremendous* in size and so startling in the *appearance of the advertising*, opened thousands of people's eyes to the vital importance of securing an efficient fire extinguisher for their homes and for their automobiles. There was a tremendous market open for the sale of fire extinguishers, because only one automobile in five was equipped and very few homes had efficient fire extinguishers ready for instant use, to put out the little blaze before it became big.

Somebody Sold the Goods

At the moment when this big campaign was inaugurated there was a splendid opportunity for stores throughout the country to put in an interesting demonstration of the fire extinguisher and to cash in on the big desire that was created by the national and local advertising. Almost every merchant will realize that when a full-page advertisement of a burning automobile appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Collier's Weekly*, and *The Literary Digest*, while half-pages were appearing in the women's magazines and at the same time full-page advertisements were printed in local newspapers, telling of the vital need of being protected from fire, thousands of people were going to be GOOD PROSPECTS for IMMEDIATE SALES.

When such a campaign is followed up by an announcement in the store's advertising that an interesting demonstration of that article is being held in that store during that week, people who have become interested in the national advertising will be interested in coming into the store to see the actual article advertised and to learn more about its merits and uses. The merchant who, at such a time communicates with the manufacturers, making arrangements for an interesting display and an expert demonstrator, will create an exceedingly interesting store feature and a unique window attraction. He will show his alertness and progressiveness and at the same time actually secure a very handsome volume of profitable business for his store.

The Alert and Progressive Merchant

Many nationally advertised articles are sold chiefly by hardware dealers, automobile accessory shops, and drug stores. Department store merchants have not yet begun to realize the tremendous possibilities of taking advantage of such campaigns, except to foolishly cut prices just when thousands of people are interested in knowing where to buy the advertised goods at regular prices. They do not seem to realize the value of catering in a sane and profitable manner to the big demand that normally follows the stirring up of the public by a thorough national advertising campaign.

Merchants who will take advantage of such campaigns will unquestionably attract to their stores a lot of business that would otherwise go to hardware and other specialty dealers. All national advertising is planned far ahead and local merchants, or their representatives, are usually notified by manufacturers when any special campaign is coming; so, if an intelligent spirit of co-operation exists, and the merchant realizes the advantage that may be his by hooking up with the manufacturers' efforts, it may be arranged quite easily. Then,

with the merchant's local advertising appearing simultaneously with the national advertising, the local dealer gets the fullest possible benefit of the big national expenditure—thus making the national advertising HIS ADVERTISING. And this receptivity and the resulting sales of the goods—provided that they are of deserving quality and usefulness—are as certain to follow good advertising as pressure and power to follow the development of steam in a good locomotive.

XLVIII

ADVERTISE GOODS IN DECEMBER INSTEAD OF PRICES

The Keynote of Christmas Advertising

When people are buying their Christmas presents, prices are secondary. The gift, its attractiveness, its suitability, are everything. If merchants and advertising owners could only get this big fact into their systems, there would be bigger sales and far bigger profits from the holiday campaign. Most merchants are far more intent on *keeping business from going to their competitors* than on stimulating people to want their own goods and studying how to present and advertise their merchandise so that it will be eagerly wanted by hundreds of people who got their first suggestion in the store's advertising.

The biggest fault of all is assuming that people want a bargain more than desirable, attractive goods. The majority of department store advertisements all over the United States during the month of December are going to be PACKED with BARGAIN offerings for Christmas presents!

When you think of it now, in cold blood, doesn't it seem ABSOLUTELY RIDICULOUS!

Mother's Christmas Bargain!

Just think: Here is a \$5 blouse that wasn't attractive enough to sell at the regular price; so it is reduced to \$3.95. How delighted your mother will be to receive it for Christmas! How fine to show your love for your mother, your wife, or your thoughtfulness for a friend, by deliberately choosing a passé, slightly damaged, slightly off-style blouse, for a Christmas gift—to save \$1.05!

Why, people should go and hide somewhere until Christmas is over, rather than be so mean and contemptible as that! And they would—if they thought twice about it. If \$3.95 is the amount of money I have to spend for my mother, my wife, or my friend, I want to get the newest, cleanest, most fashionable blouse that can be bought BRAND-NEW for that money. So do you!

Then why not, for goodness' sake, *give your customers credit for as much good sense as we have!* Have your bargain days and your bargain items; but let us assume that people who buy cut-price goods are going to use them for themselves. Let's leave them their self-respect and keep our own!

Get the "Christmas Spirit" Into the Copy

Now let us make this thought the KEY-NOTE of our Christmas advertising. Let's bring out the fine things, one stock at a time, and get some fine Christmas gift "copy" written in the middle of November, before the rush time comes and while we have time to relax and absorb the Christmas spirit that should be written into the real copy for the advertisements of those busy days. Let's tell the story of the months of preparation of the flax, the joy of the artist when he had finished the design of the pattern, of the days of watchful care while the linen was bleaching on the grass in Scotland or Ireland. Tell how the flax fields have been destroyed in Belgium, how millions of the workers in Russian flax fields are now in the ranks of war, and HOW SCARCE all linens are getting, and how rare are the exquisitely fine linens still in our stocks.

Let us write attractive stories about the silks and dress goods, and how delighted mother, or sister, or wife will be with the dress pattern for Christmas. But *pick out some special pattern or color*, and tell, with all the enthusiasm you have, just how becoming, fashionable, and durable it is. Make every woman reader *just hungry to have such a dress* and make

every man feel that that is the gift he must buy. Don't fill your space with "Table Linen at \$1.49 a yd." or "Charmeuse Silk, in various shades, reduced to \$1.19."

The Gift for the Wife

Put yourself in the reader's place. Suppose he is a man who hasn't decided what to buy for his wife. *How can you help him*, and get a sale at the same time? I'll bet he won't be helped at all by reading that you have reduced the prices of house dresses or corsets. His wife is a good mother who loves her home and likes to have nice things, but never gratifies her desires because she is thrifty and wants to help him get along. And Christmas is coming! Give him a suggestion like this:

How Long Has Mother Been Wanting a Handsome Dinner Cloth?

What a pride she takes in the things she puts on the table!

You know what delicious things she will have ready for Christmas Dinner—how proud she will be when they are served.

Has she waited until now for you to give her

The Snow-White TABLE CLOTH and Napkins

that will make the Dinner and its settings a complete success?

Won't she think this is the finest Christmas since you were married, if you give her A HANDSOMER SET OF LINENS THAN SHE EVER EXPECTED TO OWN?

You can do it now—at the old low prices; for while imported linens are going up in price very rapidly, we still have a fine collection of Table Cloths and Napkins, imported before the war raised the prices.

Nothing could make a finer gift for Wife or Mother.

Or shall we take the tip from *The Woman's Home Companion* and advertise this:

Some of the Things You Can Make between Now and Christmas

It might take quite a snug sum to buy six or eight gifts for the friends you think you can safely forget; but wouldn't you feel better if you had some dainty gift, made by your own hands, at a mere trifle of cost, to send on Christmas morning to each of those surprised and delighted women.

For instance:

For Jane: A Knitting Bag, of heavy tan linen, embroidered with gay little clusters of flowers: lined with bright blue poplin.

Price: The Linen, 11c Emb. Silk, 6c Poplin, 12c.

For Mary: Tan Linen Pillow, embroidered in a rose design. Very attractive.

Price: Linen, 28c Emb. Silk, 9c Cotton Filler, 12c.

For Ella: Silk Sewing Case, embroidered and fitted with needles, bodkins, and scissors.

Price: Silk, 22c Emb. Silk, 5c Linen, 6c Elastic, 4c Needles, etc., 12c Scissors, 25c.

Won't you feel happier on meeting these friends after Christmas if you don't forget them? Plenty of other suggestions when you come in.

Tell a REAL FASHION STORY about hosiery and socks—their new importance, since they have arrived at such a conspicuous place in life. Have a nice assortment of the best novelties to show to those who want to make up Christmas boxes of silk stockings. Tell what a fine gift it will make for brother, or husband, to select two suits of pajamas and decorate them with handsomely embroidered initials. Tell how to

make a pretty draw-string bag and fill it with a dozen gold collar buttons, six short ones for back of collar and six long ones for the front, to make brother happy on Christmas and save his temper when one rolls under the bureau.

Help People to Think

Suggestions are the vital things. If people are told what to give, they will GIVE TWICE AS MANY GIFTS. It would be perfectly amazing if we could ever realize how many hundreds of thousands of gifts are not sent on Christmas because the would-be senders *couldn't think of what to buy!* Fill your newspaper space with IDEAS. Write stories full of ENTHUSIASM about your goods and their desirability for Christmas gifts. Tell the news of all the holiday things; but don't neglect to dig out the Christmas spirit that is to be found in almost every article in the store.

The more helpful you make your advertising to the readers, the more increase you will find in the sales of holiday goods.

XLIX

MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS ADVERTISING APPEAL TO THE HUMAN HEART

The Suggestion that Counts

Some time ago I had the good fortune to hear a very successful salesmanager give an address on the subject: "A Million Dollar Hold on the Human Heart," and I want to make this big idea go to work for you this holiday time—to help you sell MORE and BETTER holiday goods. He told his salesmen how to make their selling-talk appeal directly to the human heart of the customer—to make their lives fuller and happier. It made me think of the tremendous effect it would have on the sale of finer Christmas gifts, if we could keep the customer thinking about HIS HEART instead of concentrating on his pocketbook. And that is a very practical thing after all.

Hearts Not Pocketbooks at Christmas

The whole Christmas celebration is inspired by the heart. Once every year the whole civilized world spends its money freely to express its love or thoughtfulness for family and friends. While the season gives the excuse, why shouldn't we use this "Hold on the Human Heart" to make more people live up to the spirit of Christmas, and make many other people feel stingy if they give presents that do not properly express themselves and their relationship to those who receive the gifts?

The public thinks of the things that you put into its mind. There is a tremendous responsibility on the part of people who write the things that people read. There is abundant proof

that people not only read enormous quantities of advertising, but *are tremendously influenced by it!* So you may well consider the thought: "*How am I influencing the people who read my advertising?*"

"Show" People and They Will Follow

It will be EXTREMELY EASY to make your advertising during December put more sentiment into the minds of your public and thereby stimulate people *to buy more liberally* than they otherwise would. If you can make people believe that they owe something to the Christmas spirit, that people have a RIGHT to expect a little more consideration from them, that they are not doing full justice to mother, to wife, and to the children, if they permit themselves to be stingy at Christmas-time—then you will be able to sell them MORE GOODS and BETTER goods. You will be rendering a definite service to your community at the same time that you are making more money.

I know that it is always easier to give advice than to follow it, so I am going to give you actual advertising "copy" to show how this "heart appeal" can be translated into actual, sensible, and PRACTICAL advertising.

Will This Christmas Be One "Long to Be Remembered" in YOUR Home?

This has been a wonderfully prosperous year. Most people have more money than they ever had before. Husbands by the hundreds are planning to give their wives the things that have been LONGED FOR, FOR YEARS, but which they felt that they couldn't quite afford before.

The "Spirit of Christmas" was never more dominant than now.

This store is splendidly ready to supply the Gift Things for "The Jolliest Christmas that Your Home ever Knew." Come and see!

The Christmas Season Is the Great "Heart-Opener"!

What a wonderful institution Christmas is! Hearts that grow cold and distant during the other fifty-one weeks, are each year renewed in loving or thoughtful warmth. Families that are parted are again brought in close remembrance, and friendships that might otherwise be entirely forgotten are gratefully deepened by the agency of some simple gift.

We all come to realize, sooner or later, that it is not money that makes happiness; but the friends with whom we are blessed.

And so, each Christmas-time we use GIFTS to bind us closer to our Friends.

What a priceless service is rendered to us by each gift we send!

What a loss is ours, when we forget some neglected friend. What a shame, for some narrow reason, to send a gift that falls short of winning the love or grateful remembrance which should be ours on Christmas morning, indeed, for a whole lifetime.

Let us RESPECT the service of the Gift, and choose each one with thoughtful care. This page is filled with wholesome suggestions.

What Wealth of Gratitude Shall Christmas Bring for YOU?

Someone wrote, long ago: "'Tis sweet to be remembered"; and it seems as though Christmas was created to foster "sweet remembrances"—to keep us from forgetting friends that we may not see often, and to enable us to show our affection for those near by, with whom daily association makes our whole life's happiness.

Thoughtfulness and Yuletide liberality make for a happy Christmas and true and lasting friendships.

If There Have Been Disappointments in the Past Surely There Will Be None this Christmas!

There CAN'T BE, if you simply say today: "There SHALL NOT BE a single disappointment in my home, nor among my friends," and then start at once on the plans to prevent such a calamity. It's worth all the time it takes—and certainly the few extra dollars, to FULFIL EVERY HAPPY EXPECTATION!

What shall we do to help you?

Window Cards

Put a little "heart palpitation" into the window cards. It will do a lot more good than showing "reduced prices" on Christmas gifts. Stir up the human instincts—the finer natures of the people. Stimulate them to give the best things. Shame them, tactfully, if they are thinking of buying "the cheapest thing" for some Christmas gift. For instance, use some such phrases as the following on your window cards:

Which of these Useful Articles is TOO FINE
for Your MOTHER?

Whose Wife Better Deserves one of the
Most Beautiful Blouses in our Store?

The BEST WE HAVE
Is None too Good
For MOTHER!

Have You a Daughter that You Are Proud Of?
and that You Want to Have Feel Proud of YOU?
Then Choose Her Christmas Gift from These.

How About That BOY of Yours?
What Is He Expecting
from His "DAD"?

These were selected for the
"very Best Babies in Town"—
Which did we bring for YOURS?

A Little Better than the Ordinary Kinds—
for this is Christmas, you know!

There's a tell-tale message in every Christmas Gift—
"I think a LOT of YOU!" is the good word
that goes with every one of these.

But after writing the window cards, don't fail to make the merchandise *live up to the sentiment* that the card expresses. Don't put a lot of soiled and mussed truck into a window and then say: "The best is none too good for mother." Don't try to make an undeserved reputation for a lot of old "plugs" by putting them in the window with the sign: "A little better than the ordinary kinds," for it *won't go across*.

Give Fine Things a Chance

Use fine sentiments to sell fine goods and to get full prices and full profits. Give your fine Christmas merchandise the best chance it ever had and see if you don't make the BIGGEST SALES and the BIGGEST PROFITS that any holiday season ever brought you.

L

GET YOUR SHARE OF PRESTIGE FROM THE GROWING PUBLIC SENTIMENT FOR TRUTH IN ADVERTISING

Honesty Pays

This chapter will be read by scores, if not by hundreds of merchants, who have either recently or long ago established the policy of strict HONESTY in their advertising and in their business methods, because they know it pays! I am not going to start another argument for honesty in advertising. I simply want to point out some facts, and suggest ways for you to take definite advantage of these conditions and *cash in on them*.

The Associated Advertising Clubs of the World, composed of men connected with the biggest manufacturing and retail concerns in the world, have started a propaganda for truth and honesty, which is having a most astonishing effect! They have inspired a sentiment all over the country which finds its way constantly into magazine and newspaper editorials and special articles. They have caused to be written and published free in thousands of the biggest and best magazines and newspapers, a *powerful series of advertisements* about business honesty and condemnations of dishonesty in advertising.

People's Eyes Are Open

In New York City, the *Tribune* has printed the most scathing articles about the alleged dishonest advertising of scores of retailers. The result of all this work is that millions of

people all over the Continent have begun to CRITICISE ADVERTISING, to resent misleading statements about merchandise, and to give their respect and support to merchants and national advertisers whose published announcements are above adverse criticism. In New York City, the retail stores of Sixth Avenue, most of which were notorious for their exaggerated advertising statements, are gone. John Wanamaker who is equally famous for honesty, while his establishment is A MILE AND A HALF from the shopping district, is today doing the LARGEST VOLUME OF RETAIL SELLING in New York City.

Honesty DOES PAY!

It Pays to Tell About It

Now, while thousands of people have discovered for themselves that John Wanamaker is honest and his goods reliable, it is my definite belief that his widely acknowledged and widely KNOWN reputation for honesty and reliability has grown to its present proportions only because *he hasn't been too modest to widely exploit his principles and policy*. If there is any advertiser or any merchant who doubts that it has increased John Wanamaker's reputation for honesty, to advertise it as he has done, I have never heard the doubt expressed in words. So I think it has been abundantly proved that it not only pays to be honest and square with the public, but *it pays to tell the public about it*.

It is a psychological fact that people very largely think the things that we tell them to think. If we talk about our belief in honesty and how we apply it to our business, they will believe that we are honest and that our business is more honestly conducted than other businesses that don't do so much talking about it—provided, of course, that our business ACTS do not belie our words. The people who suspect John Wanamaker, just because he talks so much about honesty, are too few to consider—if there really are any such.

Indorse the "Honesty" Movement

And so I believe that it will be a very wise policy for good stores all over the country, to come out frankly and *indorse the movement for honesty in advertising*, unless they are definitely afraid that a policy of honesty will cut down their business. In this case I don't consider them good stores, and certainly don't think that they should say a word about "Honesty."

Women's Clubs Are Boosting It

With the growing disfavor for dishonest bargain screams, there is growing a tremendous demand for FACTS about merchandise in all kinds of advertising. Wide-awake retailers are studying the problem of how to make the most of this condition. The Housewives' League and the Women's Federated Clubs are pushing the propaganda for honesty in advertising and they are actually BOOSTING merchants and manufacturers who have taken the definite stand for honesty and truth. There is no better time than NOW for you to take the action that will get this valuable influence working for you.

What You Can Do

Now WHAT is the best plan to CASH IN on this valuable public sentiment? First, I would suggest a series of editorials, to be run in your advertising columns, similar to the two for which I supply "copy" on the next page. Second, I would suggest that you watch the various trade papers for articles on honesty and advertising, and the square deal in merchandising and *reprint them* in your advertising columns. Boost THE GAME and you will be carried along with the tide of public approval that is bound to follow.

"Copy" for the suggested advertisement follows:

"NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH"

The merchant who tries to succeed in business by deceiving his public is living in the past and his business is doomed to an early death.

This is the age of CONFIDENCE and SATISFACTION, and the capable merchant, whose goods are well bought, intelligently selected, and moderately priced, has no need to overstate their quality, or to exaggerate their value.

This Store has only one claim to make upon your patronage—SERVICE.

Our Merchandise must be the BEST. It must always be exactly RIGHT and JUST WHAT YOU WANT. It must be in good variety, and it must be fairly priced. So long as we excel in supplying your requirements in the best possible manner, we may justly expect to win our deserved reward. When we grow lax, we doubtless shall receive our just deserts.

In the meantime we shall tell you the TRUTH in our Advertising, and over our counters. We trust that we shall never have to show merchandise so lacking in merit as to require that more than the truth be told to make it seem attractive to our customers.

"Good wine needs no bush," and right merchandise needs nothing but the Truth to recommend it. Here are the simple facts about things you will like to see:

For another day, this one:

Something You Get HERE

Even If You Don't Ask for It—

TRUTHFUL FACTS ABOUT OUR GOODS

The chief duty of our Advertising, as we see it, is to give the Public EXACT INFORMATION about our merchandise.

The same policy rules in our Selling.

We believe in our merchandise or it would not be here. It had to possess definite quality standards, or we should not have invested our money in it. It proved itself to us, before we bought it. That is why we can recommend it to you with absolute assurance that it is RIGHT. And, being right, we can see no reason for misrepresenting any of our goods to our customers.

We believe this policy will meet the approval of discriminating and careful people, such as it is our desire to serve.

LI

FACING THE MARKET-PRICE FACTS IN YOUR ADVERTISING

Commercial Cowardice

It is a humiliating fact that most storekeepers are rank cowards about stating FACTS to the public. They have no confidence in public opinion and are frantically afraid of admitting weakness, for fear some competitor will say that market advances have not hit him, and therefore he is in better position than other merchants to sell goods at lowest prices. The most helpful fact during 1916 and 1917 was that all the newspapers told the facts about price advances almost daily for months. People were pretty well educated to conditions and ready to accept the plain facts when the merchant stated them.

I think that the smartest thing that a merchant can do is to *quote newspaper statements about price advances* to give a strong backing to his own advertising. For instance, here are items quoted from the New York newspapers that would be good for advertising use:

Little Wool Is on Hand

Speculation in scoured wools is one of the features of the wool market. It is predicted that little wool will be on hand Jan. 1st. High prices continue to be paid in the West. The outlook is for much higher quotations.

Mills Cancel Hosiery Orders

The reason why mills are not delivering all the goods called for on their orders is that they cannot get the materials necessary to their manufacture. Extraordinary difficulty is being experienced in getting mercerized yarns.

Rubbers are Very Scarce Now

All season long stocks of rubber overshoes and arctics have been subnormal, but now a positive scarcity of these goods exists, as a result of the stimulation of the consuming demand caused by last week's heavy fall of snow. Many sizes are missing in retail stocks and there is a heavy shortage in wholesale supplies.

Dress Goods Prices Going Up

Dress Goods prices now on the market are very strong, and according to the best opinion in the trade will shoot upward on the slightest provocation. The orders which men's clothiers will place for the coming season will push up wool and yarn values, so that present prices will look low in comparison with what will have to be paid in the near future.

Strength of Quotation

A little watchfulness will enable the merchant or his advertising manager to clip a continuous supply of such news items for advertising use. No bragging on the part of a competitor can withstand the continuous firing of these market-price FACTS. They will win confidence for the store that states them. The trade papers are even better filled with these merchandise facts than the daily papers, though not quite so up to the minute.

Now the next thing is to discover the most powerful use to make of these price quotations. Later on in the season, they will simply bolster up your regular prices. But with January and February merchandising and selling to face, they will be used chiefly to emphasize your special offerings by making people realize that they must not expect the striking bargains by which they profited in other years. They will make your customers see, moreover, that the bargains that you offer are even better than any in the past, because they are made *in spite of these drastic price advances!*

How to State It

These circumstances enable you to use very different headlines from heretofore for your bargain sales. Here are some suggestions, varying from the style that will be used by the popular stores to those that may be used with quite good taste by the most dignified stores:

**We Announce for Tomorrow Our Extraordinary
"COME OUT AND GET UNDER" Sale**

Bringing One of the Very Last Chances to Buy
Needed Goods and Beat the Big Price Advances

**Our Ample Stocks of Last Year Make Profitable This
GOOD OLD ECONOMY SALE!**

Which Cannot be Repeated After Present Stocks are
Sold

**Save YOUR Pocketbook from the BIG PRICE
ADVANCES**

Our JANUARY CLEAN-UP SALE

of Last Year's Low-Priced Goods Offers Splendid
Economies that May Not Be Matched Again in Years

After starting your advertisement with such a heading as this, you should tell in detail how and when each line of goods was bought, to make the story of its legitimate cheapness very reasonable and logical to the public.

It is a fine time to bring out your old goods. It gives you the most complete reason for BRAGGING ABOUT THEM, for they must possess vastly higher quality for their price than the goods that have been bought on the market more recently. Make the most of these price FACTS.

"Confidence Begets Confidence"

My experience at Wanamaker's proved to me absolutely that IT PAYS BIG to be free and frank about *taking the public*

into the store's confidence. People are far more reasonable than most merchants give them credit for being, and they bestow their confidence and their trade on those merchants who most completely show that there is **NOTHING TO HIDE** about their business relations with their customers. Your confidence begets *their* confidence.

Recently I have had correspondence with a number of important merchants from various parts of the United States and they all agree that people are willing to pay the normal increases for merchandise—that they are expecting the increases and have no complaints to make about them. All of this emphasizes the importance of using your advertising columns to repeat the price facts from the newspapers and the trade papers, to justify constantly the price advances that every honest merchant will have to quote. Every merchant will have various lines of merchandise, bought on the old basis, which if rightly used, will provide excellent advertising material in connection with the facts about rising prices. But hundreds of merchants will lose their chances for the creation of valuable good-will and public confidence by their cowardly fear of plainly stating price facts in their advertising.

Watch for the Turn of the Market

The hard conditions will come when the market turns the other way and goods are cheaper every time you go to market. That time must be faced, perhaps sooner than you expect. For that reason no wise merchant will risk speculating with goods that he has on hand. It is vastly better to earn a little extra good-will and lose some possible profits, than to get the last dollar possible out of your goods while the market is on the rise, and then lose profits and a solid slice of your actual capital, by being caught with high-priced goods in too large quantities when the big slump comes, whether it be next year, or in three years.

Be a MERCHANT—not a speculator—and you will be safe, whatever conditions come. Advertise so as to deserve public confidence all the time, by keeping your public informed about the facts that they have a right to know about conditions on the market.

LII

ADVERTISE YOUR NEW GOODS WHILE THEY ARE NEW

Don't Advertise "Cut-Prices" NOW

The most vital time of the whole year to make sales and PROFITS, is when your store is filled with new goods. What a foolish time to waste newspaper space in advertising bargains, when the entire public is eager to see and buy the NEW things! Yet I am willing to wager that ninety-nine stores out of a hundred will devote the larger part of their space in newspapers, right through the height of the season, to advertising reductions in price—mostly "reductions" that exist only in the imagination of buyers or advertisers, but still making people think that the stores so advertising have nothing but old goods, job lots, or merchandise that is not good enough to bring its full value.

At the height of the season people are not thinking of "bargains." They don't want to buy the "cheapest thing they can." They want to see and wear and use THE NEW THINGS! If you have the new things for sale, for mercy's sake, *tell the people about them in your advertising!* If your store at the height of the season is not filled with splendid new merchandise that deserves the enthusiastic support of the advertising manager and all the salespeople, there is SOMETHING WRONG WITH YOUR STORE!

Tell of the Fine Things People Want

Granting that your store is filled with fine new THINGS in every department—all *crying out to get a word about them in the newspapers*—what a shame it would be to have the big

selling month of April, or October, pass without a single word in the papers about dozens of splendid lines of regular merchandise at full profits, when *thousands of people are just waiting to hear about the goods* in order to buy them! What a CRIME against both prestige and profits for your business, to fill your advertising columns all this month with alleged, or even real bargains, and *crowd out* the news of new goods that thousands of people are hungry to read!

If you have real ability in your advertising department, whatever you advertise is going to create desire for possession on the part of the reader. Then how foolish it is to put all your brains and effort into *boosting the thing you don't want to sell!* How doubly silly, when the thing you want to sell most is the very thing THAT PEOPLE WANT TO BUY, if you would only have the good judgment to tell them about it in an enthusiastic manner.

Put the Buyers on Their Mettle

Make up your mind today that for the rest of the month your advertising shall tell the story of the goods that you want people to know about and that you want to sell. Take one line of merchandise after another and get the buyers stirred up to the top-notch of enthusiasm about their merchandise; get out of them the fullest possible information about every good thing that they have in stock. Then sift out the things that will make good advertising copy. Wherever you find a new line of merchandise in stock, in which your capital has been invested but about which the buyer cannot become enthusiastic and cannot tell you something that will make good advertising matter, then you have either made a poor investment, or something is the matter with the management of your store.

Many a time I have been compelled to criticize a buyer's merchandise in the most drastic manner, in order to make

him tell me what was good about it. Even when I knew that his merchandise was really good, I have told him that it was mighty poor, in order to have him defend it. The buyer who has very little advertising imagination and can say very little about his merchandise when he is getting up an advertisement, will very often explode with the very best kind of an advertising story when you make him mad. Sometimes this is the only way to get good advertising out of department people. If you put the buyer on his mettle he will advertise in a splendid manner, and if your advertising manager is present, he can get a good story to tell out of any good lot of merchandise in your store.

Command Respect for Accuracy

Of course, your ready-to-wear apparel will not be neglected. These are favorite departments in every store and they get a big part of the advertising space. But do not discount the value of this merchandise by advertising it as being worth more than its price in April or October. Stand your ground and maintain that it is the best goods obtainable at its price. Then people will have confidence in the prices you quote. They will also have confidence in the style of the garments and in the manner in which they are made. Say everything you possibly can about the apparel, but do not indicate that the price is not absolutely all right when it stands on its own feet. If a woman's suit is a \$15 suit, tell her that it is the best \$15 suit obtainable, but do not spoil your whole story by saying that it is "worth \$20," because people do not believe it, and when they don't believe the fact about the price, they begin to doubt everything you say about the quality and style.

Talk GOODS Not Prices

Don't forget that October is the month when you must sell your goods by the yard. People will buy ready-to-wear

goods later than they will goods by the yard, because yard goods demand work and extra time to be made up. Get out your dress goods and silks and have the strongest advertising possible prepared for them. Don't be satisfied to say that taffeta silks are a dollar a yard. Tell about the *fashion craze* for taffetas (or whatever silks are fashionable) this season. Say something about the quality and finish, the width, and the garments for which taffeta silks can be fashionably used. Tell about your novelties. Tell one story after another, day after day, until you get people thinking that your silks are the only silks that are worth buying in your city. Then do the same thing with the trimmings and the laces and all the other accessories.

A splendid harvest of sales should be made in the upholstery department. Tell about the new portieres and lace curtains, bringing out the new points in your story, so that housekeepers will feel that the hangings they have on their doors and windows are old-fashioned. They may not be interested in buying curtains at cut prices. They may not be thinking of curtains at all, but by telling them about the new patterns, you may convince them that they should change their old curtains for new ones.

Make New Things Alluring

This is one of the secrets of advertising which so many merchants, and sometimes advertising men themselves, forget. You are not only appealing to people who feel the need of the merchandise that you are advertising, but about half your results come from creating such an interest in the articles advertised on the part of the reader that she will be impelled to visit the store and make a purchase. You must keep always in mind that at least 50 per cent of the goods people buy are to take the place of merchandise that is not worn out at all. A large part of your business is constantly

created by making people throw away goods that are plenty good enough for very much longer service. Men and women cast aside clothing, not because it is worn out, but because somebody has induced them to believe that the styles have changed, or that they should have different patterns.

It is exactly the same way with necessities and comforts in the home. The old easy chair may be much more comfortable than the one you are advertising, but if you can make the housekeeper believe that the room would be more artistically furnished by possessing the new chair, the old one goes to the attic even if it is father's favorite. This is why you must continually be doing creative advertising. This is the reason that so much advertising fails when it merely quotes prices. A bargain is all very well as an appeal to someone who has already made up his or her mind to buy that particular article. But if you want to make a new customer for your store's merchandise, you must write something interesting which will get the attention of people who had no thought of making any purchase of the sort until your advertisement was read.

The Time for Real Profits

The time in which to do this valuable, stimulating advertising is when people are spending money on new apparel for the new season, and housekeepers are fixing up their homes. The right suggestion will sell merchandise to people who had not been thinking about it at all. This is why I urge you, with all the emphasis I can, to advertise your NEW GOODS in the most enthusiastic and liberal manner during the months of October and April, particularly. Do not let any good line of merchandise suffer for the lack of getting a story told about it in the newspapers. You will have days and weeks and months in which to advertise bargains later on.

Tell the story of the new goods while they are new.

LIII

TELL THE PUBLIC WHY YOUR GOODS ARE DESIRABLE

The Most Intimate News

People are eager to read real information about every sort of merchandise. Editors of newspapers and magazines, especially of women's sections, would be discouraged, perhaps humiliated, if they ever came to realize how universally women pass over their "good stuff" to get at the advertising quickly. The fact is that the most important news for women is the advertising, because when it is properly prepared it bubbles over with live, fresh news about things that women want to buy. They are infinitely more interested in securing the facts about the merchandise in which they want to invest, than they are in reading about an earthquake in San Francisco, the war in Europe, or the latest murder and divorce cases.

We know this to be true, because we see the evidence of it every day in our lives. In New York City many women who may not approve of the manner in which the news is presented in certain papers, insist on seeing those newspapers every night simply because of the great volume of advertising of the big stores which they publish.

The News Value of Advertising

The question as to which comes first, big circulation or big advertising, has always seemed to me like the question of the egg or the chicken. While big circulation is the convincing argument to the advertiser when he buys space, big

advertising is unquestionably the biggest builder of popularity for a newspaper, and thus the largest creator of volume of circulation. If we consider these facts carefully, we shall begin to realize that advertising has a bigger value than many merchants concede it. After you recognize the desire of women particularly, to read advertising, you will certainly take more interest in the kind of advertising that you print about your store. While women are hungry to read the advertising, their appetite is satisfied only by **REAL INFORMATION** about the merchandise. If you look over your own advertising and the bulk of the advertising in newspapers of your city and other cities, you will very likely say that there is very little valuable information in any of it.

Most stores insult their customers by the insinuation that there is nothing interesting to them but the fact that something is reduced a few cents or dollars. Until the season is entirely over the people of your community are still eager to get information about the things which they intend to buy for current needs. Your store is doubtless **FILLED** with merchandise that they want. Are you going to keep the knowledge of your merchandise a **SECRET**, or are you going to print the news about this interesting merchandise and tell people just **WHY** the goods are desirable to the people who require them?

Don't Keep Your Goods Secret

If you are going to be satisfied, as some merchants are, simply to put a list of your merchandise in the newspaper, with the prices, you are going to lose half of the advertising value. You are going to leave yourself in the position of being no stronger than your competitor who is doing the same kind of advertising. But if you will stir up some **ENTHUSIASM** in your advertising department, put some ginger into your copy, get real news about your merchandise into the

newspaper, you are going to accomplish a number of things. First, you are going to make women eager to see your advertising, so that they will watch for it every day. This is one of the most valuable assets that a store can have. In the second place, you are going to sell a great deal more merchandise than you have sold under the old policy of listing the goods. Third, you are going to create an atmosphere of excellence for your merchandise and your whole business, which is going to make talk about your store, that will be very valuable for you immediately and in the future. Fourth, you are going to stimulate the people of your organization by the enthusiasm that you put into your advertising "copy," for, of course, they read it themselves—they ought to. In many stores the advertising is so deadly dull that the salespeople do not read it and do not get any help from it. But the well-built "copy" of a good store is one of the largest factors in developing a strong selling organization. At the same time it is creating desire on the part of the public for your merchandise, it is a constant education and stimulus to the salespeople.

Tell Why They Are Good

There is no doubt at all that your store is *filled with good merchandise*. The problem is to dig out the facts. They must be got from the buyer; they must be got from the merchandise itself; they must be got from your best salespeople. The writer of advertising must go to all these sources of information and ask constantly: WHY? WHY? WHY? Why was this merchandise bought? Why will the customer buy it? Why was it marked at this price? Why is the merchandise good value at this price? Why was it dyed this color? Why is it 46 inches wide? Why wouldn't something else be better?

After all these "whys" are answered, the advertising writer

has some interesting information to start on, and even a kitchen towel can have an interesting story told about it when the real facts are known about its quality, its value, its usefulness in the kitchen, and what a trifle it would cost to throw away towels that are giving only half service now; and get a new supply, that will be a credit to the housekeeper and an inspiration to greater cleanliness on the part of the kitchen help.

The Habit of Thinking

Most advertising is done in a perfunctory manner. Advertising people get into the habit of doing things a certain way and forget to THINK. The live business that grows to bigger and bigger success must possess in its organization people who think. The merchant himself must get out of the rut and must think. The general manager must think. The buyers must think. The writer of advertising who doesn't keep thinking all the time is in the wrong business. He should have an imagination and should use it, not to write fanciful and untrue stories about the merchandise, but to think out all the possible uses for the merchandise and all the reasons for its quality and excellence, to put human interest into the story of their manufacture, as well as to suggest the final use of the merchandise.

A New Spirit Developed

When this sort of thought is developed all through the organization, when everybody begins to realize that there is a better way than the ordinary way to arouse public interest in the store, a new spirit is going to be developed in the organization, which will begin to accomplish results. I recall one time when the firm turned over the management of the business for an entire month to the general manager and the merchandise buyers. The object was to develop thought and initiative on the part of the organization. The firm said,

"We are not going to have anything to do with the business next month at all. We are going to make suggestions, perhaps, but you may use them or not. You are going to take our position and we will take yours. Now see what you can do with the business." The result was the most tremendous jolt that organization had ever received. The responsibility was thrown squarely on their shoulders. They were compelled to recognize the importance of the thing they were undertaking, and every man began to think.

A Totally Different Store

You would have thought it was a totally different store in another city. Everybody felt a stimulation that had never been known before. The general manager developed initiative and ideas in an amazing manner, and every buyer thought that the whole store depended on him. It resulted in a month of marvelous merchandising and such a stampede of GOOD, LIVE, INTERESTING advertising news as had never been known in that store before. The buyers had to fight for space in the newspapers, because all were demanding it at the same time, and in order to secure the space they had to tell the liveliest possible story of their merchandise—to SELL every item of it to the advertising manager. It was probably the first time that the buyers had ever got right down to the ground in their efforts to tell every good thing they knew about their merchandise and why it was the most alluring merchandise in the store to advertise at that time. They told the advertising manager why their goods were the best ever sold at that money, why they were most desirable at that moment, and thus gave him a compelling argument to present to the public. Then he began to tell the public why the goods were fine, desirable, and low priced. When the advertising took on a new spirit and life, the public response was tremendous.

It is amazing how indifferent department managers are

under ordinary circumstances, in presenting their merchandise to the advertising manager. They assume that it is all right and that all they need do is to give the name of the merchandise; the sizes and colorings, for instance, and the prices, with perhaps the original value. That is all that they put into the advertising when the responsibility is not on their shoulders. But their fullest energies are developed when the responsibility is thrown right on them. Then they begin to THINK, and when they are stirred up to do real thinking the first thing they realize is that the advertising must be very much better done, and that a very much stronger story must be told to the public. Then they fight to get all the information possible into the newspapers, and the result is the best advertising that the store has ever done.

Stimulate Thought

I do not know whether you are in a position to take this action in your store or not, but with proper guidance from the background, it might be possible in any store. Certainly there is scarcely any risk too great to take, if you can stimulate original thought and action on the part of your buyers and managers. There is nothing that will do this in such a powerful and responsive manner as throwing the responsibility of the business upon them for a week or a month, to see what they will do with it. Even if you cannot go out of the building and leave them to handle it themselves, you can publicly throw everything on their shoulders and then go confidentially to several of your buyers, one at a time, and give them quiet suggestions of what they might do to lead the entire force in the right direction.

But whatever method you adopt, do not neglect the vitally important matter of filling your advertising with real information about WHY your goods are desirable, so that people who are hungry for information about merchandise will get

it from your advertising columns and will learn to watch constantly for them, to keep acquainted with the merchandise in your store. This kind of interest is infinitely more valuable and profitable than the continuous attracting of people who are mere bargain hunters.

LIV

SELLING GOODS TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T EVEN KNOW THAT THEY WANT THEM

The Unrecognized Buying Public

The great buying public divides itself naturally into two large groups:

1. The people who KNOW that they want certain goods.
2. The people who DON'T KNOW that they want the goods at all.

Of course, every merchant thinks every day about the people in the first group. All of his advertising is aimed at them, because he wants to have them come to his store to buy the goods that they are in the market for. This is the most fascinating field for advertising and salesmanship. No good merchant and no smart advertiser will neglect it for a moment. Here is the storekeeper's daily work. *He must get those sales*, and he need not be urged to do his utmost to get this particular business.

But the second class of people is very much neglected. In the busy rush of reaching the first class, most merchants and many advertising men forget entirely to make the special appeal that will reach the people who don't know that they want to buy the goods at all. Here is where the merchant must go for his increased business. Here he will find his new customers. Here he will sell merchandise for new uses. It is to these people that he must point out the things they want, but about which they have never thought. Every gain here is clear gain.

Potential Customers

Advertising is constantly demonstrating that millions of people are in a recipient mood to buy things that previously they did not know existed. At one time I had a great deal of writing and talking to do about a very interesting commodity, that the public in general knew very little about. It was a fire extinguisher, which I have mentioned elsewhere in this book. Here is an article that is a **CRYING NEED** in every home and on every automobile. Yet the thought of requiring it may never come into the mind of the person who needs it until the house or the automobile is in flames, unless advertising, or good salesmanship, brings it impressively to the attention of the people who should have it.

The Unknown Want

The fire extinguisher is an **UNKNOWN WANT** in the home that never dreams of fire. But we all can realize how vital its need becomes in an instant, when at midnight there is the smell of smoke in the home and the flames are leaping up the stairway that closes escape for father, mother, and children. It is an unknown want when the automobile is running beautifully along the road, but it is a **VITAL NEED** when an explosion under the hood sets the whole thing on fire and destroys the car twenty miles from nowhere, with the wife and kiddies along. There are hundreds of such unknown wants that provide splendid possibilities for increased business for the live merchant and the bright advertising man who bring this merchandise to the attention of the public. Each item thus brought forward means adding a new line of business, paying a definite added profit. Twenty-five such added items might very materially reduce the percentage of overhead in any business.

It is just this sort of live and thoughtful merchandising that makes the difference between the storekeeper who finds

his fixed charges eating up his profits, and the one who increases his net profits by adding to his volume of sales on merchandise carrying full profits. In every store there is an abundance of merchandise that people may eventually come for, if the merchant waits long enough. But a great deal of this merchandise loses its value in his eyes because it stays there so long. The trouble is that this particular merchandise is not suggested to the public. They are not told about it. They are not told how useful and convenient it would be to have it.

Volume Comes from Stimulation

Modern business success depends upon persuading people to buy new things long before the old ones are worn out or exhausted, as discussed in Chapter LII. Very few people buy new apparel because the old is worn out. Millions of people lay aside good-looking and little worn clothes, simply because advertising has made them think that they must have newer styles. Thousands of men have three or four kinds of safety razors simply because advertising has tempted them to try the other kinds. If business were confined to the sales that would be made to the people who woke up in the morning with the definite wants on their minds, a great many department stores would have to go out of business and a great many salespeople would have to be dropped from the stores that remained.

The tremendous volume of business that is secured by all the stores is aroused to the buying point by the enormous amount of department store advertising. Those stores which persistently and intelligently advertise merchandise about which customers may not otherwise think, will definitely secure a larger volume of sales.

But there is another side to this important subject of suggesting merchandise to your customers. When goods do not

sell readily the storekeeper is inclined to blame it on the price and to make a reduction which kills the profit. At least half the time I believe that this decision is wrong. As shown in Chapter XL, every store in the country has a vast quantity of merchandise that has never had a chance to be sold. Either it has never been properly advertised and the story has not been brought directly to the attention of the people who need that particular sort of goods, or the goods have not been brought out where customers could see them.

Find the Right People

One of the great problems in storekeeping is to keep the merchandise properly placed before the people who should want it. This means that the story of the merchandise should be told in the most interesting manner possible for the advertising columns, and that it should be frequently displayed in the windows so that people who might be interested in that sort of merchandise would have a chance to see it. Almost any piece of merchandise that any store buys has been selected because the buyer thought that a great many customers would want it. Very often these desirable goods get into the store and onto the shelves—then never get advertised, or never get shown. After they stay there a sufficient length of time, they are pulled out because they haven't sold. Nobody remembers that the goods haven't had a chance to get sold, but down goes the price and away go the merchant's profits, because the goods have never been shown to the people who would want them.

The Customer Is Pleased

The merchant or the advertiser who is smart enough to tell the right story, to the right people, not only keeps his stock selling at profitable prices, but he actually does a service to the people who get the goods. When customers see goods

that they very much like and desire, price becomes a secondary matter. A cut price is unnecessary and a fair price is entirely satisfactory. Thus the customers are pleased, the merchant makes a profit, and the goods are sold. Everybody is happy because real constructive selling has been done. The price of profits is constant watchfulness and intelligent action.

The merchant or the department buyer should thoroughly organize the question of publicity. As soon as any merchandise comes into the store there should be an eagerness on the part of everybody responsible for it to get it advertised and displayed. In fact, it should be a law in every store that no merchandise should go into the stocks until a report about it is sent to the advertising manager, or to some other manager, who would act upon the question of having it properly exploited both in advertising and displays.

Potential Customers and a Living Profit

Of course, there might be a great deal of merchandise that could not afford space in the newspapers, but by establishing such a rule no merchandise could get into the house without placing the responsibility for its exploitation upon an active promoter of the business. It is too much to expect that the buyer will see the advertising value that may exist in a certain piece of merchandise. A buyer is not apt to have the copy instinct, no matter how good a salesman, and the merchant should realize that when the goods once get onto the shelves, they are helpless so far as their selling is concerned until they get advertising help and prominent display.

It must never be forgotten that no matter what the merchandise is, there must be people, somewhere, who want it very badly and who will be glad, indeed, to pay the regular price when it is brought to their attention. Do not wait for people to come in and ask for things. Do not confine your advertising to listing prices for people who know that

they want a particular thing and are merely interested in the price. Suggest merchandise that you think people ought to want. Tell them why they should want it, how they can use it, how helpful or convenient it will be. In this way stimulate your customers to buy a multitude of things that otherwise they would never have thought of buying. This is the way to increase your volume of sales and to sell more goods on which there is a living profit.

PART V

TRAINING RETAIL SALESPEOPLE

AFTER all success or failure in storekeeping depends on selling the goods.

Superb merchandising may be handicapped—admirable “copy” may be wasted—if prospective customers are met at the counters by careless or inefficient salespeople. The customer’s curiosity may be killed in a minute by a flippant or uninformed clerk.

Only lately have definite efforts been made to train salespeople thoroughly for their important function in merchandise distribution. The stores which have invested the necessary money and effort have already won large rewards in public approval, and in larger sales volume and profits.

In my own experience I have found it VITAL to advertising success to have advertising followed up with efficient salesmanship. The record of the advertising manager is definitely bound up with the work of the selling organization. Today many advertising managers are cooperating actively and effectually with the store’s training organization.

The suggestions of the following chapters should strengthen the store’s entire promotion work, and largely increase the sales volume from any given merchandising and advertising effort.

LV

WHEN THE CLERK IS THE FIRM

The Customer Never Meets You

Perhaps the thought that the clerk is the firm never entered your mind before. Naturally it never would enter the minds of your salespeople unless you put it there yourself. Probably you have never realized that the customer on the other side of the counter from the salesperson never comes in touch with you at all, or only on the rarest occasions. She knows your store and judges it by the actions and conversation of the salesperson with whom she deals.

If your salespeople are courteous and attentive, if they can intelligently meet the wishes of their customers, the customer feels that she is dealing with a satisfactory store. But if the salesperson is not feeling very well, or has been upset by something at home, or has had a quarrel with another clerk, or has been put out by the actions of a previous customer, it is very likely that the present customer may get very poor service, very little courtesy, and may miss the desired merchandise, because the clerk's thoughts are away off somewhere on some other subject deeper in her mind. But no matter what the cause, the customer is judging your store and you personally by the actions of your salespeople.

Judging a Store by the Clerks

This condition is present every day of the year and every hour of the day. Once in a while the aisle-man may help things out and once in a very much longer while the general manager himself may show the customers that the store is really a little better than its clerks. But this is so rare in

the busy day's work that it brings us back to the point where we started. Your whole store's reputation for courtesy, good service, intelligence, even honesty, depends upon the actions and words of your salespeople. It does not depend alone on your more intelligent salespeople, because we always take right treatment for granted. We scarcely remember it. Particularly do we forget it when we have received bad service. It is the actions of the poor salesperson which are remembered longest and which really make the deepest impression on the minds of customers.

Educate the Salespeople

For this reason there is nothing more important in promoting your whole business than teaching your salespeople and impressing upon them their *responsibility in representing you* to customers. It must continuously be remembered that no store is stronger or more efficient than its weakest salespeople. A great many merchants keep their eyes fixed on a few of their cleverest salespeople and congratulate themselves on their splendid organizations. They may scold and fret a little about the careless salespeople, but very few merchants seem to take them very seriously. They do not stop to think how many hundreds of their customers get no better service than these poor salespeople give them. Nothing is more necessary than a constant effort to educate and stimulate tradespeople. Right now in the heart of the season it is most important to speak as definitely and as emphatically to each individual in your organization as you possibly can. How are you going to do this? It cannot be done by writing a letter. It cannot be done by a casual word of censure now and then by an aisleman. It ought to be done, and is done in some stores, by weekly talks by the general manager to the salespeople and by monthly talks given to the salespeople by the members of the firm.

Win Their Sympathy

I do not believe that salespeople are ever fully impressed by any other method than by the head of the firm calling them together, impressing them with the seriousness of their responsibility in a kindly, fatherly manner, and throwing himself absolutely on their hands; telling them frankly and fully that they can make the reputation of his store, or they can ruin it; that they can establish a personal reputation for him by their courtesy, thoughtfulness, and intelligence in serving their customers, or that they can make the public think that he is a poor merchant, careless in his discipline and thoughtless about his customers, if they are careless in their treatment of customers.

The Heart to Heart Talk

It is a good thing to say all of this once, in the most serious heart-to-heart manner, in an open meeting of the salespeople, but it may soon be forgotten and must be repeated frequently. I think once a month is none too often for the head of the firm to talk in the closest heart-to-heart manner with all his people. The merchant who is too dignified to do this is going to make a large sacrifice to his dignity. He cannot possibly get the loyal support in any other way that he can get by this method. It cannot be scolded into people. It cannot be penalized into them. It cannot be got by discharging people when they do not act as they are told. Getting new people doesn't help matters, because they have to be educated all over again. The one sure method is to win the sympathy of all your people to the thing you are trying to accomplish, showing them that it is for their own best good and proving to them, as you can easily do, that they will be happier in their work and get more satisfaction out of it, if they try to be more efficient, and if they please their customers. The salesperson's own self-respect is upheld by her own courtesy.

Vital to Your Standing

It is important to the salesperson to improve her efficiency in all these matters; it is infinitely more vital to the firm to secure the right co-operation and to be properly represented by the salesperson to every customer that comes into the store.

LVI

THE IMPORTANCE OF STIMULATING SALES-PEOPLE

An Appeal to Their Ambition

It is no small task to impress salespeople with their responsibilities. They are usually only slightly responsive to appeals to loyalty and duty. The better method is to appeal directly to their pride and ambition—to stir them up to the desire to increase their earning powers and to enlarge their individual abilities in their profession. I know how hard it is to say the things that should be impressed continuously upon a store's employees; but it is part of the day's work of the merchant who would achieve the largest success. These words of stimulation and encouragement can never be quite so thoroughly driven home as when spoken directly by the firm before the assembled sales force; but many members of firms do not have the faculty for speaking to their people and some might not desire to express themselves fully right out in public meeting. As a help under such conditions, I am suggesting here the sort of talk that should be made to your salespeople. It might be a good plan to have it reprinted as a folder for distribution among them.

Are You a "Live Wire" or a "Dead One"?

There are just two kinds of workers in the world—the "live" ones and the "dead" ones. You belong in one class or the other, and you must answer to yourself, "In which class do I belong?" Perhaps you have been working many

years for the store you are with and for this reason think that you must be doing perfect work. Perhaps your employer is frequently thinking that the time has come when he must get someone else in your place. Some employers have a tremendous amount of patience. But the time always comes, sooner or later, when the incompetent or easy-going salesperson is told that he or she is no longer wanted in the store. This usually comes as a tremendous surprise and the salesperson is always ready to tell friends how unreasonable the employer was.

Real Salesmanship

It is time right now to take account of yourself and see whether you really deserve the position which you hold. Are you going along month after month and year after year, simply waiting on the customers that come into the store and selling them the goods they ask for? Are your sales just about the same as they always have been, or less? Have you made up your mind just exactly what you ought to do, and are you pushing off every other duty on someone else? Do you let other salespeople do the work whenever you can get out of it? Do you let a customer leave the counter as soon as she has stopped asking you for things? If this is the kind of a salesperson you are, you will hold your position only until your employer wakes up, and you must not be too sure that he and his managers are fast asleep.

No salesperson deserves the name who simply asks a customer, "What would you like to have?" and then takes it down from the shelf, has it wrapped, and takes the money.

Salesmanship means SELLING.

The store that tries to get along by selling the things that people come in and ask for has a poor existence. It can never grow. It can never be prosperous. Of course, the first duty of a salesperson is to find out what a customer wants and

supply that want in the best possible manner. After this is done, real salesmanship just begins. Every customer who comes to the counter presents a possibility of largely increased business for the store. Every customer who comes to the counter can be led to want and to buy other merchandise by the tactful and efficient salesperson.

The Loss from Laziness

Whenever a customer comes to your counter and goes away without being shown any other merchandise than that asked for, or without having any other merchandise suggested to her or him, it represents a laziness or an inefficiency on your part that are downright inexcusable. Of course, many customers resent being pestered by clerks who want to sell other merchandise to them, and it is against the policy of most stores to have this undesirable kind of salesmanship attempted. But the tactful salesman never lays himself open to criticism. He does not seem to be pestering the customer for another sale. When a woman comes to the linen counter to buy a dozen napkins, it is a very simple matter for the salesperson to pull out a desirable pair of towels and show them to the customer, while saying, "Here are some new towels we just got in. Don't you think they are unusually good quality?" Or if a man has bought a shirt or two, it is so easy to pull out a box of neckwear and say, "Here are some new striped scarfs. Don't you think they are very attractive?"

A Pleasing Courtesy

Instead of the usual solicitation, salesmanship of this sort takes on the appearance of accommodation, of being courteous to the customer, of showing new or attractive things that are in the store. There is no need to urge the selling point. The talk should be entirely about the attractiveness, the newness, or the usefulness of the article that is being shown to the

customer. Attention of this sort is exceedingly pleasing to 99 men or women out of 100, because everybody likes to see new things, and it is very frequently felt to be a compliment to people to be shown the finest and most attractive things in your department.

The salesperson who is a "LIVE WIRE" will never let a customer come to the counter without tactfully suggesting other merchandise than that asked for. The clerk that does not do this is not earning the salary he or she is getting, no matter how small it is. Such a clerk is an absolute menace to a store, because he is permitting customers to come into the store and to go out without buying the goods that might have been sold to them.

The clerk who merely sells the goods that are asked for is a "Dead One." The clerk that always lets other people do the extra work around the store is a "Dead One." The clerk who thinks he is smart enough to tell what customers can buy the nicest goods in the department and what customers cannot, is a "Dead One"; because the one thing that experience teaches is that the fine things and the expensive things are frequently sold to people whom you least expect to buy them. And another fact about storekeeping is that many a person who could not afford to buy fine things at all, is tickled to death to go around among the neighbors talking about the fine things that she has seen at your store. The clever salesman shows his goods as much to have people talk about them among their neighbors, as to make an immediate sale.

Out of the Rut

The salesperson who hopes to amount to anything in the world must WAKE UP. Get out of the old rut. Never miss an opportunity to introduce and to sell other goods. The customer who comes in for a paper of pins may be sold a \$600

piano. I have seen such instances dozens of times. I was told the other day of a customer who came in to buy a \$2 waist, to whom a clever salesperson sold \$250 worth of Oriental rugs, that the customer had not thought about, before coming into the store.

Thousands of people every day are buying goods they never thought of buying, simply because clever salespeople are suggesting it to them. If you want your salary increased you must prove to your employer that you can sell more goods. If you don't care to have your salary increased, your employer should discharge you today, because you are a dangerous salesperson. You are not only worthless to the store, but you are standing in the way of other salespeople who could sell merchandise for your employer. Make up your mind today to be a better salesperson. See if it isn't very easy to sell twice as much goods as you have sold in the past. Make a determined effort during the next month to see how much you really can sell. See how much extra work you can do about your department. See how clean and neat you can keep the merchandise that you have under your care, and you will be amazed to see how much more delight you will take in your work. After you get your ambition aroused to double your sales, selling goods will become a game and you will take the same keen interest in it that you would in a contest for fun alone.

New Pride and Interest in Your Work

The person who works without any ambition has a dull life and a bad disposition. The person who takes a thorough interest in doing the work at which he or she is employed in a better and more competent manner has something to look forward to every day. The increasing of your selling records day after day and week after week becomes the most fascinating thing in the world. You begin to have more self-

respect and your employer values you higher every time you increase your sales record.

The world despises "Dead Ones." Everybody admires the "LIVE WIRE." Make up your mind TODAY to develop knowledge and efficiency in salesmanship. See how many extra sales you can make tomorrow over and above the goods that customers ask you for. Keep a record in a little book. Then try to do better the next day and the next. Take a pride in doing it and you will be amazed to find how fascinating the work of a salesperson can really be. And this will be worth more to you in self-satisfaction than all the salary increase you get, even if your salary is doubled.

Be a "LIVE WIRE"—don't be a "Dead One."

LVII

THE SALESWOMAN IS "A HOSTESS"

The Clever Saleswoman

The tremendous importance of educating salespeople should keep every merchant and manager thinking every day how he can make the people in his employ more intelligent and efficient. You cannot too often stir up the thoughts of the salespeople as to the importance of the work they are doing and the way not only to make a success, but a real pleasure out of the work they are doing. So I am going to write here a letter to your salespeople which tells the story of a very efficient saleswoman in New York. If you will have it printed in neat form and distributed among your people, I think it will do a lot of good.

Making Sure that It Is Read

It would probably be better to call a meeting and read it to them first, and then hand them a printed leaflet afterward for further study. And, of course, a matter like this should not be dropped after the circulars have been passed around. One week after these circulars are passed around it would be well to send out another in which you would ask, "What have you done during the past week to make your service more helpful to your customers? What have you done to enable you to show greater interest in them when they come into the store?"

It would be a very fine thing if you would arrange some system by which each salesperson could be asked to write out the answer to these questions on a slip of paper and send

them to the manager's or the firm's office. Half the battle in selling a big volume of merchandise is in selling *salesmanship* to your own people. If you can make them take a real intelligent pride in their work, so that customers will learn to like them and want to come to your store, you have done much to secure a successful season.

Here is the letter:

The Salesperson Who Pleases the Customer Has Pleasure and Pride in the Work

The Saleswoman Who Knows

Recently I was waited on by one of the best salespeople that I have ever known. I went to the toilet-goods department of a store where I have a charge account, selected articles, then asked to have them "charged and sent home." When I gave the clerk my name, she said, "Oh, you are Mr. Hotchkin. I always wait on Mrs. Hotchkin. The address is 183 Claremont Ave., Montclair, isn't it?" Since I had not noticed her before, I supposed that she was a new salesperson, and was surprised that she remembered the address so perfectly. The next time I went to the same counter, she said, "Good morning, Mr. Hotchkin, what can I do for you?" She remembered the name, and was cordial and polite. The moment I said "soap," she said, "Mrs. Hotchkin always likes—(naming the soap); do you want the same this time?"

She always knows her customer's name. She knows the kinds of goods that the family buys. She anticipates just what you want, with the sort of intelligence that shows that her mind is on her business, and that *she takes a pride in it*. That is the sort of CONCENTRATION that makes a good bridge player. How infinitely bigger and more fascinating is the game when played with live human beings instead of cards,

when human nature provides the trumps, and the skilful salesperson wins trick after trick by knowing their power and how and when to use them! How infinitely greater is the mental development of the clever salesperson who can remember all these facts, traits, likes, and eccentricities about her customers, than that of the most expert card sharp who knows every card that has been played, and by the sixth trick knows pretty accurately where every card is held! How infinitely more valuable is such knowledge and ability in winning one's way in the world, whether by selling more merchandise and making more interested customers, or whether it be by applying the ability to the making of friends in politics or in social life!

Pride in Her Work

The salesperson I spoke of above is a mature woman, tall, stout, heavy on her feet, and very possibly suffers from corns or bunions. But I have never seen her when she didn't wear a pleasant smile for her customer, and I have watched her while she was waiting on all sorts of people. She doubtless has abundant justification for having frequent grouches, but she never lets her customers see them. She greets her customer as a pleasant hostess would greet a visitor calling at her home. She is dignified, but most cordial; eager to anticipate every wish, just as though she were a hostess taking wraps, and selecting the best chair to seat her guest. When she shows her merchandise, you might think the mistress of the home was showing you choice blooms from her garden, or a new piece of jewelry that had been recently received, or a rare painting that you had not seen before.

She has the dignity and the cordiality of a hostess, because she recognizes that you are calling on her at her business home. You are her guest, and she always does her utmost to make your visit pleasant, for she wants you to return. She

believes in her merchandise and she fills you with her confidence. I believe she has sufficient strength of character to tell the manager or the owner, that the merchandise is not right, when she doubts its quality. She applies her **WHOLE MIND** to learning the things that will make her more pleasing and helpful to her customers, so that she will give the most intelligent service possible always.

She gets **REAL JOY** out of her **DAILY WORK**. That is the greatest thing in the world—to find real joy in the work we do.

Her Work Is a Game

She doesn't consider it drudgery to sell goods behind the counter. Heavy woman that she is, she doesn't bewail her fate because she has to be on her feet, and she smiles in spite of her possible infirmities. She has created for herself a **GAME**—right out of her daily work—more fascinating than bridge, because it is **REAL**. Every morning she comes back to the game, with the same keen desire to win that drives the bridge fiend back to the cards. But in her game there are **NEW CARDS** every day. New customers to get acquainted with, new conquests to make, new clients for herself, new customers to create for the store.

Whenever I think of toilet articles, I think of that woman. I know that she knows my name, that the address will always be right, that the goods won't be sent **c. o. d.**, that if I happen to forget the name of the soap I want, or the nail polish, or the kind of tooth brush that my wife likes, or if I want good, honest advice about tooth paste or hair brush, I can depend upon what she tells me, because she wouldn't try to fool a customer, and also *because she knows*.

A Store with Such Salespeople

My, how I wish I knew one such man or woman in every department of a store. But, how infinitely greater is my wish

that I owned a store *with salespeople like that in every department*. They would be clever merchants who could eke out a living in the same city with me, or my merchandise would be pretty bad—far worse than such salespeople would put up with.

Five Rules for Success and Happiness

If I were told that A HUNDRED THOUSAND SALESPeOPLE were anxious to have me tell them how they could best improve their working conditions and *get more happiness out of life*, I would tell them to cultivate the policy and temperament of this woman in the toilet goods department. First, *recognize* the real *dignity* of the work you are doing. Appreciate and *respect it*. Second, *educate* yourself to greater intelligence and *efficiency* in serving your customers. Third, train yourself to know your *customers by name*, and also to remember *their addresses*. Make it a habit to remember what kinds of staple goods they buy, and what sort of things they are apt to like in novelties. Fourth, always *smile*, just as you would to a friend who visited you in your home. Remember that every customer really is A GUEST OF THE STORE, and will be a guest of yours when you win his or her confidence, and thus become an individual asset for you, as a salesperson, because that customer will always come to you to be served. Fifth, TAKE REAL PRIDE in your work. Make it the greatest joy of your life to succeed in the work you are doing. No work can be menial—nothing can be drudgery—that is not made mean by being belittled by the person who does it. You remember that Tom Sawyer made the white-washing of a fence so alluring that the boys left the base-ball field and paid him everything they had: jack-knives, fish-hooks, nails, marbles, and other negotiable wealth, to induce him to forego the pleasure he was getting out of the work he secretly hated, and let them enjoy it awhile!

Make a Joy of Your Work

Get the real SPIRIT of the GAME.

Develop yourself, until you become a real EXPERT at the craft. Let every customer be to you a NEW DEAL OF THE CARDS, and see how many tricks you can take. Remember that you always hold as many trump cards as your own mind can create, from a past study of your customers and from a development of your powers of memory. Store your mind full of INFORMATION about your customers. If the facts do not stay readily, make a note-book of essential facts about customers' names, addresses, preferences in merchandise, names and ages of children, birthdays, anniversaries, weddings of children, with the new family names—and you will please and amaze your customers by your apparently deep interest in them.

It will help mightily, in making you a more efficient salesperson and in making friends of your customers. But *it will be worth infinitely more*, in the assurance it will give you in your selling work, and in the JOY and PRIDE that it will build up in your own mind over the success you make in your chosen vocation.

Play the game to win and YOU WILL WIN.

One New Step Each Day

But remember that no one ever becomes expert in any game without tireless practice, complete concentration, thoughtful study, and above all, an enthusiastic DESIRE TO EXCEL in that particular direction. You need *take only one step each day*. You don't have to do it all at once. TODAY you need only make the RESOLUTION. If you give your whole heart to it, in a few years you may be MANAGER or OWNER of a successful store. Begin now.

LVIII

EDUCATE YOUR SALESPeOPLE BETWEEN SEASONS

Before the Busy Days

While the busy selling season is on, and especially during the pre-Christmas rush, the education of salespeople is often sorely neglected. But there is nothing that is more vital to successful storekeeping than the constant, persistent training of the people who, every day and hour, meet and serve your customers. Nowadays, most stores do at least a certain amount of conventional work with their salespeople—*but how far under the skin does the education get?* What are you accomplishing in getting *definitely better service* for your customers?

During the quieter days of January and February, July and August, is the time to do AGGRESSIVE and EFFECTIVE WORK in educating and stimulating your salespeople. You doubtless dropped from your payrolls, on the night before Christmas, all the people whom you did not wish to employ permanently. The salespeople whom you now have are, of course, selected for their greater intelligence and efficiency; they are the material out of which you must create YOUR PERMANENT SELLING ORGANIZATION.

How Horses Are Trained to Win

If you were the owner of a stable of fine horses and wanted to WIN RACES, what would you do about the horses? Would you keep them in their stalls and every day throw out your chest and say: "I've got the ponies. Lead me to the race

meets!" Would you count on their past performances, and feel that their physical and mental abilities would always be ready for the test. Well, I guess not! You would hire a trainer, or several of them; and you would have skilful grooms. You would put the horses through their paces to some extent every day. The trainer would watch for every little fault, for any lack of ginger, for any indication that they were not in perfect health. And he would TRAIN, TRAIN, TRAIN!

Poor Selling Causes "Shopping"

If you expect to have an organization that will WIN SALES—always getting the maximum amount of purchases out of every customer served, *you can't go to sleep on the job!* You've got to train, train, train—EDUCATE, EDUCATE, EDUCATE! I don't believe that any merchant ever had conception of the enormous amount of business lost to him by inefficient selling. I do know that the word "shopping" has won a new meaning in the dictionaries, because customers now habitually go to *two, three, or maybe six different stores* to "shop" (which means merely to *look*) before they buy. Now I do not pretend to say that ALL of this "looking around" can be overcome. But I do definitely say that not less than half of this great loss to your business could be overcome if you had thoroughly efficient salespeople.

Do you have any conception of what it would mean to the distribution and reduction of your "overhead costs," and to YOUR INCREASE OF PROFITS, if you could STOP THIS LOSS that comes from weak selling power? Do you know how much it would mean in putting your store head and shoulders above those of your competitors, if you provided such efficient service to your customers?

Probably you will say: "Oh, my selling organization is as good as my competitor's, or better." Perhaps it is. But are

you willing to stop there? If all other selling organizations are weak, is that a reason for yours being weak and *losing money for you?*

When It Pays to Pay

Probably nine merchants out of ten say: "Why should I pay for educating and training salespeople whom my competitor will hire away from me tomorrow, or as soon as they learn their business?" That, I believe, *is the chief reason* why hundreds of stores go along in the old wasteful way with careless and shiftless salespeople. If you can't keep your people after you train them, you are a poor buyer. Because if you are a good buyer of merchandise, why shouldn't you be a good buyer of labor? If you can appraise the better qualities in merchandise and are willing to pay for them, why shouldn't you be equally able to appraise the improved qualities in your salespeople and be willing to pay for them? If you won't **PAY** your people when they deserve it, you deserve to lose them. But if you do pay them what they deserve, and if you create pleasant working conditions for your people, and a stimulating atmosphere, *you will not lose them*, and every day you will find your business growing to the point where *you can well afford to pay the highest wages*, while your competitors cannot afford to pay enough to take them away from you.

Now, where shall you start **TODAY**, in the work of training? Call a meeting of a third of your selling force. Follow this by two other meetings until all have been gathered. In this way two-thirds of your people will always be at the service of your customers. At this meeting try to stimulate them to self-improvement in selling ability. Tell them what I have written above—how you have selected them for your permanent organization. Impress them with the vast loss that comes from failing to please and sell every customer.

Teach Employees Tact and Zeal

Don't start them out to plague customers to death, but teach them to *win sales on selling merit* without a shadow of offensive effort. Impress them with the dignity of their work. Show them that customers come to the store of their own free will, seeking things that they want, and that they will be grateful to salespeople who intelligently and efficiently aid them in finding these things. Demonstrate to them that their work is NOT so much merely to SELL the goods, as it is to HELP customers in the selection of the things which *they have the desire to possess*, or which when they are shown, *they will be glad to learn about and secure*.

It is my positive opinion that most women DETEST having to go from store to store to find what they want. There are a few who go to stores merely to look around, but they are certainly a small minority. Most women, and ALL MEN, are best pleased when the salesperson immediately comprehends what is wanted and is able to supply the needed goods. In other words, the customer that comes into the store is almost always *quite as anxious to get the goods* as the merchant is to sell them, and is upset and provoked if the salesperson does not find and supply them.

Four Rules for Good Salesmanship

Now, when you get your salespeople into this understanding about service salesmanship, these are a few of the things that you should teach them:

1. *Preparedness for Intelligent and Efficient work.* This can be attained only by the salesperson absorbing the fullest possible INFORMATION about every item OF MERCHANDISE in the stock—its character, quality, uses, merits, etc. This requires that every salesperson should be technically educated until he or she becomes an EXPERT on all the merchandise in that department. In this work of EDUCATION about merchan-

dise, the buyer should hold frequent classes all the year round, as the new goods arrive.

2. *The Importance of Good Manners in Selling.* As I have said so often before, the customer must be looked upon as A GUEST of the store, and the salesperson as the host or hostess. You would never fail to SMILE to the visitor to your home; so you should never fail to *smile when greeting the customer*. If your guest should express a desire for a glass of water, in summer, you would think it a pleasure to go and chop ice and prepare it. Never think it less a pleasure TO MEET THE WISHES OF ANY CUSTOMER—no matter if it does seem to be a bother. This is simply showing good breeding and gives a dignity to the salesperson that not only commands the customer's respect, but makes the customer want to be served by that salesperson again. Thus COURTESY becomes the salesperson's great ASSET.

3. *The Value of Understanding What the Customer Wants.* Very frequently the customer does not definitely know what is wanted, or may only THINK that the thing asked for is the best thing for the purpose. Thus the salesperson should seek to learn what NEED OR REQUIREMENT is back of the goods asked for, if there is any doubt either about having the goods asked for, or about their pleasing the customer. The fact that specific goods are not in stock need not mean that the sale is lost. Neither does the fact that the goods asked for have been shown to the customer, justify selling goods that will be found to be wrong. The biggest thing that any salesperson can do for the store is to help the customer to obtain complete satisfaction.

4. *How to Avoid Losing a Customer.* When the exact goods asked for are not in stock, the first thought should be: "What other goods would meet the requirement fully as well?"—and show them. The *last resort*—which should never be omitted—should be to *get the goods for the customer*, when

you definitely know the exact thing wanted. If the customer can wait, it should be got from your own market. If the customer is in a hurry, you should send a special messenger to *purchase it from your competitor* and send it home to your customer. Always remember that it is infinitely better for YOU to purchase the goods from your competitor, than for you to drive your customer into your competitor's store. She might see something else she wanted to buy—and she might get the habit of going to the other store. It is vastly better to give your competitor a SALE than to GIVE HIM A CUSTOMER. Never let any customer leave your store without getting the goods wanted, if it can possibly be avoided. Thus your own self-defense may also be construed by your customer as unusual courtesy and service, and though you don't get immediate profit, you may win gratitude and make a loyal friend and booster for your store.

Bigger Sales and Satisfied Customers

When you can get all your salespeople to understand these vital features of good salemanship, get them educated about the goods they sell, get them to *take a pride in their work*, and when you get their *ambition stimulated*, you will probably be amazed at the change that will have been accomplished in your organization, and the new prestige that has been created for your store. Start this indispensable work right now. Make the most of every quiet day summer or winter, by planting the seeds of efficiency that will enable you to reap a greater harvest of increased sales and better satisfied customers during the busy and prosperous times of spring and fall.

LIX

WHAT SMART APPEARANCE AND GOOD MANNERS MEAN TO SUCCESSFUL SALESPeOPLE

(Another Letter for the Salespeople)

The Pleasant Face and the Clean One

If we could line up a store's salespeople on two sides, like the old-fashioned spelling classes, we might make a remarkable demonstration, and prove several important matters that are not now realized by men and women who sell goods for their livelihood. Suppose we placed on the one side all the clean, neat, well-kept, pleasant-faced, mannerly salespeople, and on the other side placed the dowdy, frowzy, grouchy salespeople, with soiled collars, dirty hands, and black-lined finger nails. Next, suppose that we arranged two long counters, each supplied with the same goods, and each prominently placed where all customers as they came in the store could see both counters and all the salespeople. Next, suppose we march all the neat, clean, pleasant salespeople to the back of one line of counters. Then we march the dirty, ill-kept, grouchy salespeople to the back of the other counters.

Then we let the customers come into the store.

Which counters will make the largest volume of sales for the day, the week, the year? Every man and woman of you knows the answer and knows that there is no question about it at all. There are matters about which people have radically different opinions. But in this case *there is not a merchant on earth, not an intelligent salesman anywhere* who will even *hesitate a moment* about which side will win—and win in a walk! Every one of you knows that the customer will go

first toward a *pleasant* face—then she will favor the *clean* face—next she will choose the man or woman whose hair is well combed—next the appearance of the clothing will win favor.

Neat Clothes, Not Fine Ones

Probably *not once in a thousand times* will a customer give preference to a clerk who wears EXPENSIVE CLOTHES. In fact a fancy dress, or a “dressed up” appearance, will cause a customer to pass that saleswoman by, for *no saleswoman should be dressed up* for her work any more than a trained nurse should be. The trained nurse wears garments that are the simplest style possible, but they are immaculately clean. Yet they say that more men fall in love with trained nurses than with any other class of women. There is every reason for the saleswoman’s dress being simple, neat, and clean—for the salesman’s suit to be clean and neatly pressed. There is never any excuse for the salesperson’s face not being absolutely clean; and if hands get soiled, they should be promptly washed; if the hair gets mussed, it should be brushed. Shoes should be neatly polished.

These things are merely showing proper respect to customers. Every customer is a GUEST of the store—and every salesperson is a *member of the store’s reception committee*. When the salesperson begins to realize his or her responsibility, and the importance of the work, it creates a different attitude of mind, and it makes a different person out of each one.

Carelessness Wins no Raise in Wages

Every salesperson worth a grain of salt has AMBITION. Every one wants to get ahead in the world, and make more money. Careless people don’t get ahead, and careless people don’t make money or win friends. The careless boy or man

is never selected for the better job. The careless girl or woman is never given larger responsibility—nor is she picked out for a wife, by any man worth marrying. A soiled dress or collar, a dirty face or neck, or dirty teeth or finger nails are glaring proofs of carelessness, which everybody sees! Such salespeople may be tolerated at times; but *they never get a better job or an increase in wages!*

The clean, bright face, the clean collar or dress, the quick, pleasant action when the customer appears, marks the wide-awake salesperson, who takes a pride in the work, who is alive to the responsibilities of the position, and who by showing thoughtfulness and the proper preparation for duty *gives the manager a suggestion* as to whom to choose for more important work, larger responsibility, and a larger salary. Grimy hands and face are an HONOR to those whose work brings honest soil, but dirty hands or face on the part of a salesperson simply SHRIEK out the fact that *the store's goods are dirty*, and so not desirable, and not worth the price.

The Clean Clerk Helps the Store

Thus the unclean salesperson causes actual loss to the store, and actually *marks down the value of the goods*. On the other hand, the clean, neatly-dressed, pleasant-mannered salesperson *gives an atmosphere of excellence* and attractiveness to the store and the merchandise, and thus becomes a REAL ASSET to the organization. The salesperson who shows, by his appearance, that he holds a good opinion of himself and his work, adds to his dignity and to the valuation that the firm, as well as the customers, will place upon him. No man or woman can expect others to show them more respect than they show for themselves. Neatness and cleanliness are most vital. But neatness and cleanliness and well kept clothing might lose most of their great value, if the salesperson lacked GOOD MANNERS and COURTESY.

The Store as an Educator

The salesperson has many advantages over working people in other vocations. She meets people of refinement, people of high social standing, educated and cultured people, from whom much of value may be learned. These people must be met and served in the most intelligent manner. When they are so met and served, their respect is won for the salesperson, and her work is made easier and more pleasant.

Good manners forbid boldness and familiarity, even when the salesperson is very well acquainted with the customer. Obvious flattery is often really insulting to the customer. For this reason *no personal remarks should ever be made to a customer*. A pleasant "Good Morning, Mrs. Winslow," is infinitely better than "How are you?" "How well you are looking, this morning!" may seem polite, but the woman may know that her eyes are hollow, and that you are not speaking the truth.

The Friendly Smile

Every customer should be greeted with a SMILE. You know that you would smile when a friend came to your door. If you did not smile, your guest would know that he was not a friend. So, if you do not smile to your customer, she knows that she is not welcome, and she draws a comparison between you and the pleasant salesperson in another department, or in some other store and *wishes that she had gone there* while she makes a mental note not to come back to you and you have lost the chance of making that customer an asset for you!

Every salesperson CREATES HIS OWN VALUE by the way he treats his customers, and by the number of customers who like to have him serve them. The salespeople who make the BIGGEST VOLUME OF SALES are those to whom *most people like to go to be served*. The modern store bases its salaries upon the

amount of goods sold by each salesperson. There is no other tangible measure of the salesperson's value to the store. When an increase in salary is given, it is the reward for having increased personal sales. When an increase of salary is asked for, the manager decides the question on the basis of the amount of sales made by that salesperson over a period of months or years.

The Salary Increase

Picking up sales from day to day is a hazardous and disappointing method, but, if the salesperson has a comfortable list of good customers, who always come to her to be served, it makes a splendid foundation upon which to build increase of sales. *Every new customer won* becomes an asset of that salesperson, upon whom she can count for future business, as long as *she serves that customer more satisfactorily than other salespeople*.

Be neat and clean. Be pleasant and polite, and you will ATTRACT customers and KEEP THEM. Thus you will be more valuable to the store, as well as to yourself.

LX

THE SALESPERSON'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE CUSTOMER

Helping, Not Hurrying

The customer comes into the store to be SERVED. Very frequently the customer comes without *a definite purchase in mind*. Certain goods may be wanted, but there is almost always a certain amount of choice possible, and the customer should be HELPED to a decision, not HURRIED to finish the purchase. Otherwise the goods may have to be "sent back" and the sale lost. No customer should be unduly influenced to buy something that she will not be satisfied with when she gets home. That is poor salesmanship.

The customer must be helped into finding and deciding upon the right goods for the intended use. That is the attitude which good salesmanship requires. First, remember what was said in the preceding chapter about the customer's being a guest of both the store and the salesperson. This calls for COURTESY—an anxiety to learn just what the customer wishes to purchase—exactly, not merely to make a sale, but to make a satisfied customer.

Earnest Thought

So we must be earnest. We must make the completest serious endeavor to learn just what the customer wants to secure, for what purpose the article is to be used, if that is necessary to decide some feature of it; just what it is to match, if anything. When the customer finds that the salesperson has an earnest desire to be sincerely HELPFUL, she will give a

great deal more information than she would to a merely curious clerk, who has not shown such INTELLIGENT INTEREST in learning exactly what the customer desires. This evident spirit of helpfulness will win for the salesperson far greater confidence on the part of the customer, so that what she says will be more completely believed. Thus there will be created for her far greater SELLING POWER.

The impression thus made upon the customer is not only valuable in making that particular sale, but it may *be the determining factor in deciding where future purchases shall be made by that customer*. Thus a permanent customer may be made for the store, as well as for the salesperson.

Creating Store Assets

Every customer served is a possible PERMANENT ASSET for the salesperson. Every time a customer is served, the salesperson is adding to or decreasing his own individual value, for the present as well as the future. This important fact is scarcely ever realized, or there would be a vast difference in the manner in which customers are served in stores. So many salespeople act as though they never expected to wait on that particular customer again that *perhaps they won't have a chance to*. But the salesperson who wants to progress, who wants a better job and MORE SALARY, will serve every customer with the definite intent and determination to make *that customer come back to him* every time she wants goods that he sells.

The salesperson's success depends just as much upon *making new customers* and *keeping old customers* as does the success of the owner of the store. When the salesperson begins to realize this and act upon that principle, so soon will he begin to make an increase in his own value. When the salesperson begins to realize fully what every customer means to him or her, individually, *in a definite money-making sense*, the

PROPER ATTITUDE of the salesperson will almost surely be spontaneous, if the salesperson is ever to become a real success.

Be Wide Awake Always

First, the salesperson will always be on the lookout for the approach of the customer. He will never need to be called. His back will never be turned, so that the customer has to wait, needlessly, to be served, or to get attention. The LIVE salesperson will always be eager to secure another customer. This eagerness will assure the customer of a pleasant reception. The eager salesperson will SMILE a welcome to the customer. He will be ATTENTIVE to the customer's desires and his attitude will be pleasing to the customer, for he will realize that *pleasing that customer may add another regular patron* to his own personal list.

One of the most valuable "treasures" that a salesperson possesses, should be the memorandum book in which are listed the names of his OWN INDIVIDUAL CUSTOMERS. But every salesperson, who doesn't wish to fool himself, will have two lists; one in which are written the names of ALL customers whom he has served, and another, the precious one, in which are written the *names of people who always ask for him to wait on them*. Such a list as this, if it is honestly made, will be a very short one for most salespeople. But, if it is faithfully kept, it will take on a value, in time, that will be prized like a government bond.

Win and Keep Customers

Just to the extent that the salesperson values the list of personal customers, will he or she endeavor to maintain an attitude of attentiveness and helpful service to each customer: First, to win individual customers, who will bring him sales; second, to keep the good-will of the customers

who now come to him, so that all their future purchases will go into his volume.

Thousands of salespeople today look upon each additional customer as so much added labor. Some even resent customers coming to the counter. Is it any wonder that THEIR WAGES ARE NEVER RAISED?

Selling merchandise is either a pleasure or drudgery, depending upon the attitude of mind of the salesperson. Like any other work we do, we must LIKE IT, or we may come to HATE IT. Some people just love to go to a dance. To many others a dance is a bore. Many people never miss a chance to play cards. Other people would rather take a whipping than to have to fill in for a game. It is largely a question of HOW WELL WE CAN PLAY THE GAME. People who dance well, or play cards well, are the ones who like these things. Those who do not dance well, or play cards well, are the ones who hate them.

To Succeed Is to Enjoy

To succeed with anything, we must *take keen interest in it*, and then we shall have the patience, as well as the desire, *to learn how to do that thing well*. When we learn to do a thing well, we take pride in our ability, and we are never happier than when we are exerting our skill. There is no sport that attracts us more than WINNING THE GAME in the thing that we know how to do. If selling merchandise seems to be a drudgery—a kind of work that you don't like to do—then *you are in the wrong business*, and you should make a change, before it is too late. But, if you have decided to make salesmanship your lifework, for goodness' sake *get into an attitude of mind* that will take the drudgery out of it, and make every day's work *a real source of pleasure*.

Life will be infinitely more worth living, after work becomes the daily pleasure that it should be. Selling goods will

become the keenest pleasure after you learn to do it well. Only a thought lies between success and failure in selling goods. It is a mighty narrow margin. In New York state there are several places where the rain-drops fall from the leaves on one side of a tree and run down the hill to the headwaters of the Genessee River and thence to Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River to the cold Northern waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Other rain-drops fall from the leaves of the same tree and run down the other side of the hill, to the headwaters of the Allegheny River, thence to the Ohio, then the Mississippi, and finally into the Gulf of Mexico, three thousand miles away, just depending upon the way the wind was blowing where the rain-drops fell.

Think Right and Win

So it depends upon the way the wind of your mind is blowing, as to whether salesmanship is going to be pleasure or drudgery to you—SUCCESS or FAILURE. If your *attitude of mind is right*, if you realize what it means to THINK RIGHT about your day's work, it will make a wonderful difference in the pleasure you get out of life, and the reward you get for your work.

LXI

THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF A KNOWLEDGE OF MERCHANDISE

The Customer Needs Advice

No salesperson is properly fitted for selling goods until he or she is a TECHNICAL EXPERT in the particular goods that are to be sold! That may seem to be a very broad demand. A few minutes thought on the matter will show how reasonable the demand is and *how vital to success that it be true*. It must first be remembered that the customer rarely knows exactly what is wanted. He requires expert advice, and has the right to expect to receive it. Next, it will be quickly conceded that mighty few people, who come into a store to buy new things, can be expected to know how to use them properly, when they may never have seen them before.

Salespersons Must Be Experts

The merchant who sells the goods *must deliver something else with them*. A device is a useless commodity unless the buyer knows how to use it to the best advantage. Full and adequate instruction about the use of an article *is part of what every customer pays for*. The salesperson who cannot fully demonstrate a device or the way to use any commodity that is being shown, is more likely to disgust a customer than to make a sale. In fact, such a salesperson is not making a complete sale at all; as a result the article may very likely be returned as unsatisfactory, the sale be lost, and the customer seriously offended.

The customer who buys a percolator merely from its nice

appearance, without any instruction from the salesperson, may never be able to make good coffee with it, and may be gravely disappointed with the purchase, because the salesperson didn't know how to make coffee with the percolator, had never herself seen coffee made with it, nor been instructed in the use of a percolator. The customer must be told how much coffee to use, for each cup that is to be made, whether the coffee is to be coarse or fine, whether the water put in is to be hot or cold, how long the heat is to be applied and when shut off, and WHY.

If linoleum is being sold, the customer should be informed as to whether the pattern goes right through to the back, or whether it will wear off with the surface, whether the linoleum will shrink or stretch on the floor, whether it should be tacked down immediately or left to settle, before being fastened. She should also be told how to remove grease or other unusual stains.

Ignorance Inexcusable

Salespeople, today, usually have their selling confined to the merchandise in one department. When this is the case, there is no reason why they should not attain absolutely expert knowledge about each item sold. It is sheer neglect and inexcusable ignorance when they do not gain such knowledge. Yet I have known of salespeople who spent years in a department, and were still unable to answer many simple technical questions about the goods they sold. When a customer asks such a question and the salesperson is not able to answer it intelligently and completely, the customer naturally considers the salesperson carelessly ignorant, and the store inefficient, for employing such people. Thus the customer not only loses all confidence in the salesperson, but receives a bad impression of the whole establishment, which may cause her to do her buying elsewhere.

Make Sales, Not Excuses

The salesperson who has any personal pride will not want to be considered ignorant by any customer. The salesperson who wants to make sales and get a larger volume of business, as well as make added customers for future selling, *will never risk losing a customer's good-will* by such fatal ignorance. Of course there are some merchants and some managers who do not themselves realize the vital importance of having salespeople who are technical experts. Sometimes it is very hard to get the expert information. Many buyers are ignorant of many things that they should know, but there will be no excuse which will keep the salesperson from losing the sale or the confidence of the customer; *no ambitious salesperson will permit himself to be beaten* in getting the vital information, whether improperly instructed or not. The clerk's salary is raised for MAKING SALES—not for MAKING EXCUSES or throwing the blame on the buyer or manager.

Every time a question is asked, which cannot be completely answered, the salesperson should make a note of it, and get that information at once, from the manager, the manufacturer's salesman, or *direct from the office of the manufacturer*. The salesperson's spare time should be devoted to studying every item of merchandise sold in his department, not merely for the obvious merits, uses, and the other details, but so as to be able to make unthought of suggestions for using the goods, and to be able to make stronger selling arguments to arouse desire for their possession by customers and prospects.

Attracting the Customer

There are always *two lines of effort* to be used by the salesperson: First, to HELP the uncertain customer, who doesn't know exactly what is wanted for the desired purpose, and second, to ATTRACT the desire, of the passing customer to the

thing not thought about before. To be successful, in either of these directions, requires *complete knowledge of the goods to be shown*. The salesmanship that is shaky about the technical features of the goods is going to be very weak about catching or holding the attention of the customer.

Every ambitious salesperson will be a constant and thorough *student of the trade publications* in his or her line of merchandise. In all lines of business these publications are usually subscribed for by the firm, or they will be subscribed for, as a rule, upon the proper request being made. Every merchant and manager will be glad to have salespeople request to see every issue of the trade papers, for it proves that they are earnest and thoughtful about their work, and desirous of improving their knowledge of the goods they sell and learning more about methods of selling them. If salespeople do not know the names of the various trade publications that they should read, they can get the information from the buyer or from the merchant.

Sources of Knowledge

Those who sell garments or materials for garments should also be constant readers of the fashion publications, such as *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, and *The Delineator*. A thorough knowledge of these publications will soon make the salesperson an authority on styles in her community. She will find that she can command the respect of the women she serves by being able to quote these authorities, and by making daily use of her fashion knowledge as gathered from these sources. In addition to the faithful study of current publications, the salesperson who wishes to improve in knowledge of the technical facts about the goods sold, will seek standard books in public libraries, which state the origin of the industry, the mechanical facts about how the goods are made, and what constitutes the difference in kinds and qualities of the goods.

Nothing in the world so much impresses the customer with respect for the salesperson—and *nothing so much commands the high valuation of the merchant or manager for a salesperson*, as to hear an intelligent statement of the technical facts about the merchandise—showing expert knowledge about the goods being shown. Such knowledge gives the salesperson MORE PRIDE IN THE WORK, and an amount of gratification and self-assurance that is of almost immeasurable value. The labor of attaining this proficiency about the goods sold is very small to one who is in real earnest about increasing his own capacity.

Valuable Self-Development

Study the goods themselves. Get all the information possible from the buyer or manager. Secure and study all the printed matter issued by the manufacturer, and follow continuously the advertising of such goods in newspapers and magazines. Secure and thoroughly study all the trade publications about the goods you sell, and all other publications that give information about the uses of the goods. Inquire about the standard books on your merchandise and find a way to obtain and read them. Then you will have a REAL PROFESSION in life, and may become AN EXPERT in the goods you sell. The stimulus will lead to far greater advancement in both knowledge and position than you can now imagine, for "knowledge is power," and such continuous MENTAL ACTIVITY will develop new qualities that you may not now know that you possess.

Remember that there is *nothing more honorable than the work you are now engaged in*, if you yourself properly respect it and *develop yourself to the highest degree of knowledge and skill* for the expert execution of the work you do.

LXII

TECHNICAL EDUCATION—THE MOST USEFUL SELLING FACTOR

The Most Important Thing

One day I was talking to one of the biggest executives in the New York retail field and I asked him: "What in your opinion is the most important thing that merchants today should undertake, in order to improve storekeeping methods?" His answer was: "The technical education of salespeople to know all about the merchandise they sell." Now, even in the best stores all over the country, technical ignorance about merchandise is almost universal on the part of the selling organization.

I am aware that many progressive stores are doing their utmost to give their employees a thorough knowledge of the merchandise they sell. But there are two reasons why the very best efforts fall short of attaining this end. First, suitable instructors are scarce. Second, it is hard to rouse the interest of salespeople to absorb and digest properly the instruction given. There is no other source of information except the buyer. Very often special talks can be given to salespeople in a department by a clever representative of the manufacturer. Manufacturers will often be glad to co-operate in this work of education to the extent of having their own skilled demonstrators visit stores and give valuable instruction to the salespeople.

How Manufacturers Help

In fact I believe that some day manufacturers generally will organize educational bureaus and have their instructors

lay out an itinerary that will cover the circuit of a large number of stores. This is done to a certain extent by demonstrators today, but this work will unquestionably be developed to the point where it will be done systematically, and not only because of the manufacturer's desire to have his goods properly sold, but because of the growing demand on the part of merchants to have their own selling force thoroughly educated technically in reference to the merchandise they sell. But the chief source of information must be the buyer himself. He can furnish it in a form which will be most useful.

How One Store Did It

The man with whom I was discussing this subject, who is general manager of one of the largest stores in New York, has inaugurated a continuous series of weekly meetings of the salespeople, at which time they are instructed by the buyers and assistant buyers for a half hour before the store opens, or after it closes. It was not a small task to secure the co-operation of the buyers in taking on this extra work. But this co-operation was secured, not by announcing the fact that this policy had been adopted by the firm and that they had to do the work, but by selling the idea to the buyers themselves—demonstrating to them that their own individual success in the business would be promoted by having a more efficient corps of salespeople to sell the merchandise. In that way, after a while, complete co-operation of all the buyers of the store was secured.

The other problem of stimulating the ambition of the salespeople to improve their efficiency and thereby increase their earning power, was achieved by inaugurating a policy of increasing salaries, based entirely on the selling results of each individual salesperson. In the future, in this store, salaries will not be increased upon request. Neither can any salesperson be sure of continuance of either salary or position,

unless the salary is earned on a percentage basis of the volume of sales made by that individual.

Automatic Salary Increases

Periodically the question of salaries will come up and thus salespeople who have sold a larger volume than required by their present salary, will be automatically increased. Salespeople who have fallen short of the sales volume required, will either be reduced in salary, or dropped altogether, according to the conditions. There will be no basis on which an increase of salary can be secured except the volume of sales. It is anticipated that this policy will definitely prove to the salespeople the money value of improving their efficiency. ONE VITAL FACTOR IN EFFICIENCY is, of course, knowledge of the goods and the best methods of selling them. For this reason, salespeople will be keen to secure without cost, the instruction from buyers, managers, and representatives of the manufacturers.

Many stores have, doubtless, organized classes for the training of their salespeople, and many are endeavoring, some doubtless with good results, to educate their salespeople technically in the fullest possible degree. I trust that these stores will be stimulated to still more definite efforts in this direction, and will make a critical examination of their salespeople in reference to their technical knowledge of the goods they sell. There exists no reason why any capable salesperson should not be an expert in the lines of goods sold, for they are usually specialized so that the number of articles for which a salesperson is responsible is not very large.

Testing Salespeople

One plan to test the sales force is to have professional shoppers buy merchandise at the counters. These shoppers will ask each salesperson visited all the questions that a cus-

tomer could possibly ask: whether an article is all wool, and if it is part cotton, why it is part cotton; what percentage of cotton; how the wool is mixed with the cotton, whether the cotton is in the warp, or the woof; in piece goods, whether it is dyed in the yarn, or dyed in the piece; where it is a figured design, whether it is a woven figure or a printed figure, and how the printing is done; whether the colors are fast, why some colors cannot possibly be made fast; and all such questions. This work should be done not to betray the ignorance of the salespeople to the shopper so much as to demonstrate the ignorance of the salespeople to themselves, so that they will be anxious to learn the answers to all these questions from people who are competent to give the information.

Then Teaching Them

Every salesperson should be required to keep a memorandum of questions asked, to which they cannot give authoritative answers, and these questions should be referred to the buyer in every case, so that they will know in future what replies to give to customers. The questions asked buyers should also be made a subject of discussion in the training classes, so that the question presented by one salesperson can be answered to all, and thus progress made more rapidly.

There is nothing more exasperating, of course, to a customer than to be served by an ignorant salesperson. On the other hand gross injustice is often done to the salesperson because questions are asked that not one salesperson out of a hundred could answer, which would puzzle even the buyers themselves. Now if salespeople who have been really educated in the stock in the manner suggested are asked questions to which they cannot give reply, they will at least be sure enough of themselves to give an intelligent answer. They can give enough information about the merchandise to show that they are thoroughly familiar with it; and that while they

may not know the answer to this exceptional question they can answer all those they should be expected to answer.

A Systematized Plan

To make such a plan effective, the merchant and the entire executive organization should fully realize the VITAL IMPORTANCE of the *technical education of their salespeople*. Next, they should organize a plan for a system of classes, that will neither interrupt the store work seriously, nor impose a hardship or loss of much extra time on the salespeople themselves.

The firm and management must demonstrate to the buyers the vital importance of their conveying this information to their salespeople. This should be so thoroughly done that they will secure the enthusiastic co-operation of the buyers in this work. The buyers should also be instructed to secure all the help they reasonably can from the representatives of the manufacturers, and to secure all the printed literature possible about the goods sold, for the use of their salespeople. Finally, the salespeople themselves should be shown how tremendously it is to their interest to be technically efficient in reference to all the goods they sell. A system of salary increase should be inaugurated that will be based entirely on the efficiency of the salespeople.

The Essential Stimulus

In this way the whole selling plan will be based on a principle that will stimulate every unit of the organization toward increased knowledge about the merchandise itself and the best possible methods to sell it, as well as to make the goods satisfy the customer and stay sold.

I am sure that the opinion of the general manager with whom I have talked and my own conviction, which corroborated his entirely, will meet the approval of every merchant

everywhere. The technical education of salespeople is so VITAL that there is nothing more important to the merchant of today, than the inaugurating of a plan that will, as completely as possible, promote the development of the knowledge of salespeople in reference to the technical information upon the goods they sell.

LXIII

HOW TO TALK ABOUT MERCHANDISE TO THE CUSTOMER

The Flippant Way

The other day I went into a very good store to buy a pair of "pumps." The salesman showed me the conventional kinds and also a newer "dancing pump," which was two dollars more in price. This new shoe was laced in front, like an oxford, but had a pointed toe without any tip, and was designed to stay on the foot better while dancing. I asked the salesman if many of that style were sold, and whether they were considered "correct" for full dress. His reply was: "Oh, yes; we sell more of them than of any other kind." You see, he thought I was half sold, and he wanted to clinch the sale and get two dollars more on the check than the price of the usual pump.

I said: "Young man, I wanted INFORMATION which I thought you could give me. Of course, I know that not one person in twenty-five buys that kind of a pump, for it is new. It is practically UNKNOWN. A lot of men would be in doubt about its being CORRECT and its price is \$2 more than other pumps that are absolutely correct, that are equally handsome and of equal quality. Now I have to doubt everything you say."

The Helpful Way

What the young man should have said, was: "That is a style got out by our best manufacturer, especially for men who find that the ordinary pump either slips off the foot, or

pinches uncomfortably at the base of the instep. It is made on beautiful lines, is refined and dressy, and is accepted everywhere as being in good form. It fits the foot comfortably and snugly, and cannot slip off when dancing. Of course, we sell far more of the other style, because men have always worn them, and many men do not care to pay the extra price, even for the added comfort and security. But I don't believe you will ever wear the conventional pump, after once wearing these."

The thing that the customer WANTS and has a right to receive is thoroughly reliable INFORMATION about the goods he is being shown. The customer wants FACTS—not frivolous personal opinions of salespeople. Statements such as "I like that"—"I wear one of these, myself," are the means of killing countless sales. "I should like the blue one on you," is not nearly so interesting to the customer as: "Blue will go so nicely with your hair and complexion." The fact is infinitely more convincing than the salesperson's taste.

Talk Facts, Not Opinions

Technical knowledge shows its tremendous value for this reason, *when the salesperson begins to talk about the goods*. The salesperson who lacks this knowledge, who is not well-informed about the construction, composition, qualities, and uses of the goods, cannot TALK FACTS. She is thrown back upon her limited resources and can find nothing to present, except futile sentences that start with: "I think——," and which cause the customer to think twice before buying, and then not buy at all. "You know," "They say," and "The fact is," are forms to be substituted for the deadly "I think——"

It is always vastly stronger to put the responsibility for the argument *on the other fellow*. "They say pink is the proper color for a girl baby," is vastly more convincing than "I should think you would take pink for the girl baby." "You know that

a sheet always 'fulls up' when it is washed," is far better than "I always think a sheet 'fulls up' when it is washed."

State FACTS about the merchandise—not opinions. State FACTS about conditions and uses. Urge the things that the customer, herself, knows, and quote the authority of "usage," or of some fashion or trade paper. Be sure to fit yourself to give complete and intelligent INFORMATION about every article that you have to sell, and you will never be at your wits' end for something to say. What you do say will go to aid in accomplishing a sale, instead of driving away a customer.

Artistic Selling

Again it is most important to KNOW WHAT TO SAY when trying to interest a customer in goods that have not been asked for. Some years ago I was in a store in Europe with my wife, who was buying some little things that she needed. She got the most intelligent service with no outside suggestions *until the goods purchased had been sent to be wrapped up*. Then the salesman said: "Madam, just while you are waiting for your package, you might like to look at some of the fine knitted shawls that are made by hand here in Stuttgart. We are very proud of them. American ladies usually take one or two home for their own use, or for souvenirs for friends. This one is thirty-two marks and this one is only four marks. This warm kind ladies like to take home to their mothers." And my wife did—and another for herself. And, while they were being wrapped up, there were pretty laces and embroidered handkerchiefs to be looked at. But there was NO SOLICITATION at all—no begging us to look. We were offered the privilege of seeing these interesting and DESIRABLE things while we were waiting—just as a woman might show the treasured things in her own home to her guest. Such salesmanship benefits the entire store.

Courteous Suggestion

Every store and every department, has these interesting things to show customers, who don't know about them and haven't asked for them. And every counter has people waiting (sometimes impatiently) who would be delighted to look over this attractive merchandise, *if it were shown and suggested to them* in this interesting and COURTEOUS manner, while waiting for a parcel or to be served by salespeople who are busy at the moment. For instance, your customer is through with her purchase at the silk counter and is just ready to leave, or is waiting for the package. Then is the time to say: "By the way, Madam, I was just showing these new flowered silks to a lady. Perhaps you'd like to glance at them before you go. They just came in yesterday. They're one of the latest novelties. You've probably read about these new color effects in *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar*. They're suggested for blouses by *Vogue*, and *Harper's Bazaar* shows what beautiful afternoon gowns they make. This is the first lot of these silks to be shown in this city. They're only \$1.95 a yard."

Find the News Story

There must always be a REAL NEWS STORY to tell about goods that you ask customers to look at:

It must be a new arrival.

It must be a new fashion.

You must suggest a new use for it.

Or it must be newly reduced in price.

Or have been purchased to sell at a special price.

Then you must know what is the best thing to say about it, and you must say it in a manner to convey the definite impression that you are *rendering a service* to the customer by calling her attention to it. You must not give the impres-

sion of *begging another sale*. People will not tolerate being pestered and annoyed by obvious solicitations; but they do like courtesies and *polite special attentions*, and it depends upon what you do and say, and how you say it, as to whether you make these valuable additional sales for your book and friends for the store.

A Sale and a Friend

Work hard for the biggest possible results today; but never forget that *continued success* and promotion depend upon the sales you make for the entire year. So every sale must also make a friend who will come back to be served by you again, if you are going to build up a following that will make you a profitable asset for your employer. Remember that making friends of customers is just like making personal friends. Much depends upon *what we say* and *how we say it*—and the ATTENTIONS and COURTESIES that we render. To be able to *talk about the goods*, we must be *informed about them*. To be able to quote fashion facts, we must be informed about fashions. Avoid talking about what you think and be able to quote unquestioned authorities, and to state FACTS about the goods.

LXIV

TRAINING YOUR EMPLOYEES TO THINK FOR YOUR BUSINESS

What Thoughtfulness Means

Can you realize what a tremendous power it would add to the promotion of your business if every employee was learning to think how to sell more goods for you, how to save money on the store expenses, how to please customers better, how to merchandise your stocks better, and also how to sympathize with the troubles and perplexities of the firm?

I do not believe there are three merchants in the United States who fully realize the value of **THOUGHTFULNESS** on the part of their employees. There are very few merchants who are willing to recognize that every employee in the organization has brains. They employ them for a certain thing and many of them pay them the lowest wages they can get people to work for. They think that their buyers and their managers and the heads of stock can do the thinking. Every once in a while, though, salespeople demonstrate that they can think, and sometimes there are merchants who are broad enough to listen to the suggestions of these salespeople and improve their businesses thereby. But it is very regrettable to say, that there are hundreds of other merchants who scowl when a salesperson attempts to go to the office to speak to them, and when a suggestion is made it is belittled, for fear the salesperson will get too large an idea of his or her own importance.

A Hard Employer to Help

I know of one merchant who used a great many ideas of his employees to his own personal advantage, but he never

gave credit to anybody. It was said of him that if you wanted to get through an improvement in the business, in the service, or in the store arrangement, you had to present it to him in some vague manner that would make him think that he had made the discovery himself, and in that way it might be brought about.

People who are familiar with conditions inside of a store realize fully that all bright salespersons and stock people are thinking most of the time. Scarcely a day passes that the salesperson does not get some idea of how the work could be improved, or how the stocks could be made better. But because of the jealousies of buyers and managers on the one hand, and on the other hand, the fear that the employee will get too large an idea of his or her own importance, thinking on the part of salespeople is largely discouraged. For this reason hundreds of merchants fail to get important information about their stocks and the service to their customers.

The Bigoted Buyer

The jealousy of buyers is very often responsible. I have seen some merchants endeavor to put in systems of communication between the clerks and themselves, and find the whole plan blanketed because the buyer feared that his prestige would be interfered with if the facts were told to the firm. Thus thousands of salespeople keep silent on things that would be valuable to the firm, because they know that the buyer could have them discharged in an hour's time, no matter how valuable their work had been to the house. It is not always easy to get a new buyer, so the firm is willing to have employees sacrificed, even in the face of good service.

Of course, employees will think of a great many very foolish things which could not possibly be considered in any business. But if one suggestion in ten was valuable it would be well worth a manager's while to look over the ideas sub-

mitted by employees. Even if not one idea in a hundred could be adopted into the business, it would still be profoundly valuable to train your employees to be thinking about the good of the business. In this way they will take their own work more seriously. They will have a more serious regard for the work of others. They will think more about the problems of their employers. They will be more inclined to do faithful service and do it well.

What Salespeople See

Hundreds of times I have had the opportunity to see back inside the minds of the salespeople in big stores. I know just how intelligently they consider many store problems. I also know that many salespeople know more about the goods that are wanted by customers of the house than the buyers know. A successful buyer sees what is new on the market and buys it, and customers buy it because it is shown by the store. But there is another necessary service that must be provided by all good stores. This is the supplying of goods for which customers have a definite desire—the goods that must be supplied because the customer wants exactly that and nothing else.

It is all very well for a buyer to say, "Big patterns are the style." But if a large number of the customers of the house refuse to admire the big patterns and want smaller patterns, it is a very foolish merchant who is not willing to supply this demand. If enough customers ask for small patterns to make salespeople feel that there is something wrong with the stocks because they do not have small patterns, then the merchant should know about it, and the buyer should be told that there are other tastes to supply besides his own individual liking, or the suggestions of some particular manufacturer or group of manufacturers.

We all know that many manufacturers start out their

season with the idea that a certain line of goods is going to have the call that year. We are perfectly familiar, too, with the fact that if the public does not like the pattern, that line of goods cannot possibly be made into a success. There have been manufacturing wrecks every year since history began. No matter how enthusiastic the manufacturer or the buyer may be, in the last analysis the public will say whether a certain line of merchandise is going to be successful or not.

What Customers Say

If buyers and merchants were a little more eager to know what the salespeople learn from their customers when the new goods are shown, they would make far fewer mistakes in buying merchandise. There would be less goods to sell out at a loss than there are today, under the system of leaving everything to the taste and knowledge of the buyer, while belittling the suggestions of the salespeople. To repeat a point which has been discussed already, isn't it rather shortsighted for buyers and merchants to overlook the facts that the only people who come directly in touch with the customers are the clerks in the store, and that the only way to get the real opinion of the customers is from what they say to the salespeople?

Prizes for Suggestions

This matter is of such great importance that I would suggest that every merchant create a system of PRIZES for IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS from salespeople. In every department I should provide blanks on which salespeople could confidentially write their suggestions. I should provide a means by which these ideas could be placed where nobody but the merchant himself, or the general manager, could see them. I should protect my salespeople in their suggestions absolutely. They should remain confidential under all circumstances. Even when I awarded a prize I should keep secret

the exact suggestions for which the prize was awarded, except in instances where it seemed advisable to exploit the idea,—or where there could not be any possible criticism of the suggestion on the part of any buyer or manager in the house.

There are two plans for rewarding salespeople for these ideas and suggestions. One is a direct prize, like a \$5 gold piece, for any suggestion that is used in the business. But in order to stimulate continuous thought, it would be very much better to give credits for suggestions—50 points for one suggestion, 100 points for first-class suggestions that could be used by the firm; perhaps 5 points for a thoughtful suggestion that might not be used at all. But some method should be introduced by which the people who were continuously giving good suggestions could secure proper credit and could win one of a number of prizes that would be offered during the season. This book of credits would also be used by the general manager or the firm, in considering increases of salaries for the various employees.

Act on the Suggestions

The thought of salespeople should be continuously stimulated, and most important of all, the ideas and suggestions should be acted upon. When employees find that there are shortcomings in stocks of merchandise, it is because of some definite reason. That reason should be investigated thoroughly, and when it is found that the salespeople are more capable of judging what goods are desired by the public than the buyer, then the buyer should be compelled to confer with the salespeople and act upon the information that they give him, or he should be got rid of in a hurry. Any buyer who resents receiving information from his salespeople is too small a man to be given an important place in any store. The man who is a real success gathers his strength from absorbing the best that is in every employee under him. Many successful buyers

are eager for every suggestion that salespeople can make, and yet strange as it may seem, buyers who seek the co-operation of their salespeople are in the great minority.

The merchant who installs a system of teaching his employees to think, and acts upon the ideas which they give him, will be amazed at the valuable fund of information and suggestions that are made by his employees during every year.

LXV

RAISING YOUR OWN SALARY

(To be read to or by the Salespeople)

Make Yourself Needed

During the salesperson's development period there is scarcely anything else that causes quite so much depth of thought as the question of getting an advance in salary. No individual effort requires so much nerve and courage as going up to the manager's office to ask for it. What a wonderful thing it is to arrive at a state where YOUR SALARY TAKES CARE OF ITSELF!

Today there are three chief kinds of salespeople, from the salary-raising point of view:

Those who never say anything about their salary to the manager.

Those who are always trying to think up some new argument for demanding an increase in salary.

Those whom the manager values highly and is afraid of losing.

In the first group are those who are not interested in their work, and know they are not worth any more than they are getting, together with many good, but quiet and modest salespeople, who do not have the courage to attempt to argue for a "raise."

In the second group are many really worthy claimants, who do not realize their real points of strength, and a large number of restless people, who don't do the right things to really deserve an increase. If they would devote the energy, effort,

and ingenuity that they give to studying how to get the raise toward INCREASING their PRODUCTIVE VALUE, the general manager would have a harder time in finding an argument against granting the raise claimed.

The Indispensable Salespeople

The third group contains the *indispensably valuable selling force* of the store. They are the people who take life and their jobs seriously. They have AMBITION, energy, and intelligence. They take a genuine PRIDE in their work, and play it as a GAME. They work, as they would play,—to win! They not only sell goods but they also *please the customers*.

They are always “on the job,” and they do it well.

The salesperson who wants his salary to “take care of itself,” will first be sure that he is in that group. The salesperson to whom the manager can’t say “No,” is in that group. The salesperson who has BACKBONE and COURAGE when the hard-to-sell customer is in his hands, is the one who has the same compelling qualities when he faces the manager for the raise. No wonder that most salespeople shiver and quake and have a “gone” feeling in their stomachs, when they face the manager for a raise. They realize *their need of more money*, but they have no real reason for realizing the manager’s *need of them!*

Common Work Commands Only Common Wages

The question each salesperson must ask himself all the time is: “What am I doing for the store that could not be done by someone else who will be glad to work for the same money OR LESS?” In this world big prices and better wages go to things and people who are SCARCE. If you are doing common work, in the common way, with common results, you can never command anything but COMMON WAGES. Nor can *any* one AFFORD to pay you more.

No manager can hold his own job, if he pays you more money than he needs to hire someone else to do your work. No merchant can afford to pay you more than he would need to pay someone else. If he tries to do it, through some feeling of generosity, he is actually an unsafe man to work for, because his business will fail, and eventually you will not only be without an employer, but *you will have been spoiled* for any other job where you could really earn the wages you think you ought to have. It is infinitely better to be earning more than you get, than to be getting more than you earn, for you are then not only *sure of your job*, but you are also *certain of your earning capacity*, which is a mighty comfortable feeling to have. For then you don't need to be afraid of your job, and you have the fear on the other fellow. Your employer is probably AFRAID OF LOSING YOU.

But how are you to go about raising your own salary? First, by being very sure that *your work is done well*. Second, by *doing more work*, and doing it *better* than other people who are getting the same wages. To be sure of this you must sell goods, so that they will stay sold, and so that the firm will get more actual results in profits from your work, than they get from the work of other salespeople who get the same wages as you.

Sell More Goods

This is not so much a matter of *grabbing customers* from other salespeople, as it is in selling MORE GOODS and BETTER goods to the customers whom you serve. To grab customers may only offend them, and drive them away from the store. To *hurry through* with the customer, in order to try to get another, may be to WASTE OPPORTUNITIES for selling more goods to the store's customers. It will probably make those customers *avoid being waited on by you in the future*. The salesperson who becomes valuable to a store is not the

one who grabs a "big book" for himself, at the expense of the healthy business of the store. He should be eager to serve more customers, naturally, but he will *never drop any customer* until he is ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN that he cannot sell her any more goods. He will also endeavor to make such a pleasant impression that SHE WILL WANT HIM to wait on her when she comes back to the store again.

Fit Yourself for a Better Job

But, after *perfecting his own work* and increasing his regular work, and the volume of SALES and PROFITS which he secures for the firm over the "quota" required from people who earn the same salary, the salesman who is anxious to increase his salary will endeavor to *fit himself for some higher position* when opportunity comes. Of course, it will be ABSOLUTELY FATAL ever to neglect the regular day's work, in order to "dream" about some other job. That is what ruins many otherwise good men and women. But thoughtfulness always shows good-natured development, and the salesperson who intelligently and resultfully thinks for the betterment of the business, is always valued by the management. When you think of some way in which the business might be improved—for the selling of more goods—for better advertising—for the better serving of the store's customers—for ways to sell more goods at certain times, *go to the manager's office and give him the idea*—or write it in a letter to be handed to him.

If your idea is not used—DON'T BE DISCOURAGED. Go right on thinking and reporting your thoughts, if you have faith in them. The manager will get a totally new impression of you and have a *higher estimate of your qualities*, because your suggestions will demonstrate that you are alive to the bigger things of the business and have something more in you than the mere waiting for "the whistle to blow." Of course, you must not become a mere "tattle-tale," who spies on other

salespeople. Your criticisms should not be of people, but of conditions. Your suggestions should be of things to advertise and ways to interest more customers. But you must be PRACTICAL, SENSIBLE, and INTELLIGENT in making your suggestions.

And DON'T SPOIL IT ALL by asking for a "raise" the moment a suggestion is used. Have plenty of patience and *make another good suggestion*. Pile your value as high as you can. Leave the matter of increased salary to the manager. If he doesn't fix it, HIS COMPETITOR WILL.

Don't Talk—Show Him

The vital thing is to develop yourself. When the value is really inside of you, it will find a way of winning recognition on the salary roll. Don't TALK about your value to your employer. SHOW HIM THE PROOFS OF IT. Don't make him dislike you by begging for more wages. Turn the tables on him by making him feel mean because he isn't paying you what you are worth.

LXVI

MAKING BIGGER AND BETTER EMPLOYEES

(To be read at a meeting of the employees, or to be reprinted and distributed to them to read.)

Hard Knocks

The "University of Hard Knocks" is the best educational institution in the world. Its graduates have all the biggest prizes that the world has had to offer. Where the graduates of other universities have lent glory to other Alma Maters, it has usually been because the successful man took a post-graduate course under the tutelage and discipline of the faculty of "Hard Knocks." The purest gold has to go through the hottest fire before it becomes the finest and most valuable; the most successful men and women are those who have been *blessed with completest and most drastic criticism*. It is hard medicine to take at the time, but the world's pity, and the burden of the world's alms and prison support, go to the men and women who HAD THINGS TOO EASY when they were young.

Welcome Criticism that Helps

Who is going to teach the young man and woman the vital lessons of business? There are few schools, and their lessons are mostly superficial. The only available teacher of the business student is the business man who gives his time and energy to the work of instruction in the hope that the student will earn a profit for him later on. Sometimes it takes a long time for the investment to begin to pay, and many times there is nothing but loss and ingratitude. Most students resent the criticisms that are *teaching them to earn a living!*

I shall never forget an incident that occurred many years ago, when Mr. Thomas Wanamaker was sharing the big responsibilities of the Philadelphia store with his father, John Wanamaker. The buyers were responsible to him for their merchandise and their expenses. Thomas Wanamaker had a brilliant financial mind. He was an able executive and wonderfully loyal to those who served him well, yet very drastic in his criticism. He had a very blunt manner and seemed merciless at times. But he knew how to strike FIRE in creating energy in his men.

One Forceful Way

One day he sent for one of his buyers. In the ante-room another buyer was waiting and the door was open. So the man outside could not fail to hear every word said inside. After questioning his man about a certain transaction, Thomas Wanamaker gave him the most scathing "ripping-up" that probably any man ever received from a superior, where actual blows were not given. He told him he had been weak and just how and why he had failed to secure the desired results. He whipped him with the bitterest words he could think of, to sting him to the fullest possible consciousness of how he had failed and why.

The man went out of the office like a whipped dog. He knew he had been wrong. He had no answer that would defend him, and he was glad of the chance to escape.

When the other man was called in, Mr. Wanamaker said: "Did you hear what I said to?" "Yes, Mr. Wanamaker; I couldn't avoid hearing it, but it was mighty unpleasant for me to listen to it, out here. If I had been that man, I couldn't have stayed through it. I would have resigned long ago. I always thought he was pretty good man, too."

Then came the answer that few men would have looked for—"Of course, he's a good man. Do you suppose that

I'd waste my time on a man I wanted to fire. I'd tell Brewer, the superintendent, to do that. I think..... will be one of the best men I have, when I get him trained. He knows his goods. He's energetic, but he's afraid of himself. I've tried the other things on him, but haven't cured him. Now I've whipped him for the worst thing about him, and I think I stung him so HE WON'T FORGET. If he gets this lesson, it will be the making of him."

The Making of a Man

This is the side of the picture that the employee almost NEVER SEES. The employer who scolds is thought to be a brute, cold, heartless, and without sympathy. Yet, criticism is worth more than salary, when the employee has the brains and intelligence to *learn something* from every scolding received. The really brutal employer is the one who puts an untrained employee at certain work without full instructions, and then abruptly FIRES HIM because it isn't done right. It is real kindness for the boss to tell the worker about his mistakes, the more complete the criticism, the more valuable it will be to the really intelligent employee who is anxious to become more expert in his vocation or trade. The time taken to teach the unskilful employee is sheer charity until the worker begins to pay back the high cost of his education by giving profitable service to his employer.

Of course, the criticism might be given in a mild manner with pleasant words, if the boss were the smirking director of a seminary for wealthy society girls, but the workers would learn very little and remember far less.

It is a sad fact in human nature that it is only the HARD KNOCK that is sure to be remembered. The kind parent punishes the child for ITS OWN GOOD, because punishment is remembered when soft words of correction make no impression at all on most people. The employee, like the child, places

only as much importance on an error as is expressed by the words and actions of the critic. Thus, if the criticism is soft and slight, the error may be considered slight by the employee. It is often sheer KINDNESS to "cuss out" the employee "good and proper."

Learn from Your Reproofs

On the other hand, the employee who gets "peeved" and "sore," when necessary criticism is made, has a very poor chance to grow and progress. The young man or woman who does not PROFIT by criticism, and become a more valuable worker to himself, as well as to his employer, is *hardly worth the bother* of trying to help. The salesperson who learns something from every criticism that is made, is the person who is *going to boss the job some day!*

The salesperson who, instead of getting sore and pouting about a scolding, can learn enough *not to make the same mistake again* has secured from that reprimand something FAR MORE VALUABLE than an EXTRA WEEK'S SALARY. He is going to be a better salesman. When the employer sees that the man criticised *doesn't make the error a second time*, he is going to begin to have real admiration for that employee, and probably *try to cure him of other faults*—always with the hope that he will be able to make him more and more valuable for the firm.

The salesperson who *welcomes criticism* as an opportunity *to learn a valuable lesson*, is far on the road to progress in his own development, as well as in being an increased asset for his employer. But, on the other hand, the salesperson who knows too much to learn daily lessons is hopeless, and the sooner the merchant gets that kind of people out of his store the better. To stand still is to die. Growth is the evidence of LIFE. No store can be a success when its salespeople or any material number of them are "Dead Ones."

Poor Chance in Life for the Thin-Skinned

One of Shakespeare's people said: "My friends flatter me and make a fool of me, but my enemies tell me the truth, and thereby do I gain in knowledge of myself." The earnest man or woman is eager to *know his faults and to cure them*. There is NO HOPE for people who are too peevish, thin-skinned, or pig-headed to be told their serious FAULTS, and to accept criticism as something of great value to them.



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